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# HISTORY OF SLIGO.



Tmállam Tmíceall Slighe





Venerable G. Gillies

# HISTORY OF SLIGO,

COUNTY AND TOWN,

FROM THE EARLIEST AGES TO THE CLOSE OF THE REIGN OF  
QUEEN ELIZABETH.

WITH

Illustrations from Original Drawings and Plans.

BY

W. G. WOOD-MARTIN,

MAJOR, SLIGO ARTILLERY,

*Author of "Sligo and the Enniskilleners."*

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" Shall we tread the dust of ages,  
Musing dream-like on the past,  
Seeking on the broad earth's pages  
For the shadows Time hath cast."

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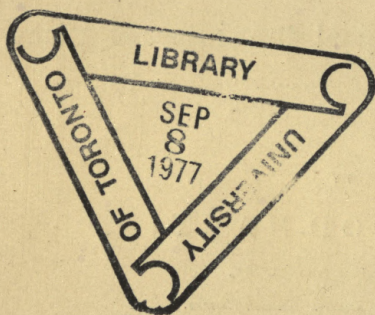
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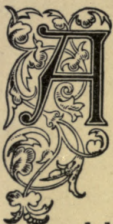
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## P R E F A C E .

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N eloquent writer has observed that history would offer additional charms for every class of reader, did those who undertake to furnish it, faithfully endeavour to embrace within the circle of their investigations, the whole life of a community, honestly labouring to represent this as it existed, “with what of completeness, beauty, and veri-similitude is possible, and banishing from their thoughts every design beyond or beside this.”

The author, without making pretension to the rare qualifications thus depicted, yet feels the responsibility of his task, and to the best of his ability, has earnestly endeavoured to present a thoroughly faithful and vivid picture of the whole life of the community of Sligo, from its cradle upwards, from pre-historic or legendary times, to historic and comparatively modern days.

History furnishes the key to many perplexing anomalies of our present social system, and this little journey through one of the by-paths of Irish History, may perhaps afford some degree of instruction or amusement, even to those who have already travelled along its well-beaten highways.

In this work it is sought to rescue from oblivion, traditions and stories relating to Sligo, which are fast passing from local memory, and over which the stream of time is ever and ever more deeply flowing—whilst to hold up to clearer view, the habits, actions, and motives of Sligo-men in past ages, may

fairly be supposed to interest Sligo-men of the present day, and yet, to be not altogether unworthy the notice of others who may have turned their attention to subjects relating to Ireland. The County of Sligo lay *without* the Pale, and was for a considerable period but little under English influence. Many of the most ancient relics of by-gone ages are to be found within its bounds—many of the early literary productions which throw light on the past of Ireland may be said to have emanated from the county. The poetic and the prose compositions of the MacFirbis' of Laccan (hereditary historians) are of peculiar interest. The system of chiefs, with their respective sub-chiefs, set forth in the poem of Giolla Iosa More MacFirbis (1416) as subsisting in the Barony of Tireragh therein described, was, it may be inferred, but similar to that which existed in other baronies of Sligo, and probably wherever the ancient customs of the Irish had not been superseded, or modified by English influence.

With regard to the various traditions noted in this work, it has been observed that, "Although legends are not history, they form no unimportant portion of it, for they often paint to us the character and sentiments of the age better than history itself, and in the present instance they, at least, give us notions formed at the earliest period."

In a legal sense, priority of possession is said to be nine points of the law; in a literary sense, priority does not seem to act so beneficially. The author of this work has found himself in pretty much the position of an old-world mariner, before the power of the magnetic needle was discovered—or that of a pioneer in a new country, endeavouring to make his way through its untravelled wilds and tangled undergrowth. The labour has been considerable of arranging, in consecutive order, the various events bearing on the history of Sligo; and of gathering together and putting into shape all the materials available for that purpose. The author has anxiously sought for his authorities in the oldest



MSS. and books attainable, bearing in mind the truth uttered by Chaucer that—

“ Out of old fields, as men saith,  
Cometh all this new corn from year to year ;  
And out of old books, in good faith,  
Cometh all this new science that men lere.”

Wherever illustrative of its history, a description has been given also of the antiquities of Sligo ; from those of the very earliest period, such as the Cromlech, Kistvaen, and Rath to “ Ivied arch and pillar lone.”

The History of Sligo may be divided into four eras—

- (i.) Prehistoric, legendary, and Milesian.
- (ii.) Danish.
- (iii.) Anglo-Norman.
- (iv.) English or Modern.

The foundation, so to speak, rests on the Annals of the Four Masters, to which Sligo may lay peculiar claim, from the work having been undertaken at the instigation of one of its chiefs, Fergal O’Gara of Coolavin ; it is the product of the joint labour of four celebrated antiquaries, and compiled from numerous MSS. collected by Michael O’Clery from various parts of the kingdom ; the compilation was made, A.D. 1632-4, in the Franciscan Monastery of Donegal, hence the work is quoted by many writers as “ the Annals of Donegal.”

“ The Four Masters ” would now carry greater weight in the way of historical reference, did not the various authorities forming the ground-work of the Annals seem to have themselves originally derived their information from a common source : those that commence with the narration of events of an early date, do so all, with a degree of exactitude and minuteness which bear internal evidence of this fact. The remark has often been made, that it is not unusual to find historical writers quoting



from four or five different authorities in support of each other's testimony to the truth of a statement when, in reality, all have alike copied from the same original chronicler, who may, perhaps, himself have been not altogether deserving of trust. In this category of facts must be placed the statement, repeated in "the Four Masters" from other chroniclers, relative to the peopling of Ireland before the Deluge. W. M. Hennessy, in his able introduction to the "Annals of Loch Cé," observes (*p. xli.*) that "the value and authority of the Annals of 'the Four Masters' have been seriously diminished by the disingenuous practice too frequently followed by the compilers, of omitting or suppressing entries which may have seemed to them to exhibit the character of ecclesiastics in a questionable light, or to cast discredit on the Church of which they were zealous members." Dr. Reeves also has condemned their great and unwise partiality, and O'Donovan, when noticing an inaccuracy in the Annals of "the Four Masters," says, "this and many other entries of a similar nature, prove that their work is a hurried compilation." Tigernach, the celebrated historian, who flourished in the eleventh century, states that all records of the Irish prior to the second century, B.C., are wrapped in obscurity; it would have proved more satisfactory to enquiring minds, could he have assured their trustworthiness after that date; but this point he leaves in doubt.

(i.) Prehistoric or Legendary History may be said to extend down the long roll of time to the introduction of Christianity. That division of the work, therefore, is grounded on the compilation of "the Four Masters," together with the "Chronicon Scotorum," the "Annals of Boyle," and some Bardic accounts; they alone attempt to treat of that distant epoch.

(ii.) A reliable standpoint is attained with the introduction of Christianity, but no remarkable advance in civilisation or education was thereby produced during the first few centuries, except

in the case of those who were destined for the priesthood. Again, too, it is from Irish annals that the events of the Danish era must, in greater part, be drawn.

(iii. and iv.) When the Anglo-Norman and English Epochs are entered upon, another class of documents is reached. Prior to these periods all native annals contain very similar information; mere chronological records of the predatory expeditions of one petty chief against another; "battle, murder, and sudden death;" no variation in the mode of relation; little or no information as to the origin of these feuds, or the motives instigating them; the bare skeleton of facts is recorded; in short, the chronicles are so sketchy and imperfect, that little could be known of important occurrences in the county, did not Saxon documents and State Papers come to our aid. A remarkable exception to the meagreness and disingenuousness charged against the Irish annalists, is presented by the compilation called the "Annals of Loch Cé." Unfortunately the MS. does not commence earlier than the year 1014, opening with a detailed account of the battle of Clontarf. These Annals have been selected by the author as the best native work of reference during the Anglo-Norman and English Eras. Sligo may claim that some portion of them was either written within its bounds, or compiled from Annals of the County, now lost, perhaps the missing "Book of the O'Duigenans."<sup>1</sup>

In describing the wooded nature of the county, much valuable information has been obtained from a voluminous MS. Survey of Connaught, discovered by the author in the Library of the British Museum. This Survey was made between the years 1633-6; it is most accurate in details as regards Sligo. The nature of the soil of each townland, its situation, capabilities, and whether wooded or not, the proprietary, tenants, castles, mills, &c., are noted down with the greatest exactitude. The

<sup>1</sup> See p. 278.



MS. is in a cramped handwriting, difficult to decypher. Can it be Strafford's Survey?

The inference is plain, that a country so thickly wooded as described in the Survey of 1633-6, must have been still more so at the prior period under review. It is worthy of notice that in the Annals and other ancient MSS. great importance is attached to the planting of hazel, and for so doing, various chiefs are specially mentioned in terms of high eulogy. It is difficult to imagine that the fruit alone could render the tree of so much value; but for the wicker-work, largely used by the ancient Irish, the hazel was indeed essential. It was employed in the formation of their "crannoges," of their "cots," of their bridges, for making hurdles whereby to render swampy ground passable; in short, its uses in the every-day life of the people were manifold.

In Petty's "History of the Down Survey" (p. 57), the following occurs relative to Strafford's Survey:—

"To the Honourable Commissioners of the Commonwealth. . . . . Particularly of the county of . . . . . Sligo, we find an office of enquiry, made by virtue of a commission from the late King (Charles I.) of all that were reputed proprietors of land within each barrony of the said county distinctly, and what estates each of them claimed, in possession or reversion; and what or how many towns, quarters, cartrons, or other quantities or denominations of land, any or either the said particular persons held and what were the severall name or names of the said lands; but neither the quality or number of acres according to 21 foot to the perch, or value of the said lands, were by the said commission to be enquired after, mentioned or exprest . . . ."

From page 51-62 "contains an official report on the Strafford Survey of the County of Tipperary, which may perhaps be taken as an example of the much larger portion of that work, which extended over the *whole province of Connaught*; and it possesses a peculiar value, as, *from the almost total destruction of the*



*maps and documents of that survey by fire in 1711, it is the only account of any importance which remains."*

In the Appendix (D) will be found not only the Survey (1633-6) of the barony of Coolavin, which is given as a specimen of the documents, but also the Chancery (B) and Exchequer (C) Inquisitions of the reign of Elizabeth. These latter are valuable to persons interested either in tracing pedigrees or investigating and explaining local etymologies. It has been observed, that "The Inquisitions preserved in the Court of Chancery, Ireland, are records of the highest authority and value. They may be classed under two distinct heads, viz., Inquisitions *post mortem*, which are the most numerous, and Inquisitions *on attainder*. They are divided according to the four provinces and the several counties of Ireland, into reigns, and generally commence in the time of Queen Elizabeth, few being prior to that period. These Inquisitions have been published for the provinces of Leinster and Ulster, but not for Connaught and Munster."

Another interesting source of information has been a MS. correspondence of the time of the Ordnance Survey, 1836-7, which contains references to the topography, etymology, and legendary lore of the county. The information was collected by O'Donovan and his subordinates. At that period some of the old natives with whom they came in contact could recite Irish stories, legends, and poems, portions of the then fast-dying Celtic traditions; they were professed *Seannachies*, or persons of unusual powers of memory.

Amid such a fund of materials, if it be considered that too much prominence has been given to minute details of feuds amongst petty rival chiefs, it should be borne in mind that the history of a county is necessarily made up of minutiae; and it is also a matter of great and general interest to note the serious evils resulting, in the times treated of, from that most fruitful source of dissension, the absence of a fixed law of succession.

For much of that portion of the subject-matter of the third chapter, which relates to the general topography and geology of Sligo, the author is indebted to the kindness of C. B. Jones, Esq., the County Surveyor (as also for the map at the end of the volume); and he cannot conclude without acknowledging his great obligation to Colonel Cooper, of Markree, for the loan of MSS. from his library, and to Colonel ffolliott (whose artistic talent is well known) for the various sketches illustrative of the monuments and scenery of the county.

Since this work passed through the press, the author has, after a close and diligent search, discovered the inscribed stone in the church on Inishmore, Lough Gill, of which the first mention was made by a stranger who visited the locality upwards of ten years since. The notification attracted no further interest at the time, or, perhaps, as the position of the supposed inscription had not been defined, ordinary searches for it had proved fruitless. A cast has now been submitted to Sir S. Ferguson, who has pronounced it to be in Ogham characters, placed in this instance on the flat of the stone, instead of being notches on the arris, the more usual form. The stone, rough and uneven in shape, measures eighteen inches by seven inches, and is built into the wall on the inner side of the entrance door of the church.

*Woodville, July, 1882.*

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# BOOK I.

## CHAPTERS I., II., III.

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CHAP. I. PREHISTORIC OR LEGENDARY.

II. FIRST GLIMPSES OF SLIGO.

III. TOPOGRAPHY, &c.





# HISTORY OF SLIGO.

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## BOOK I.

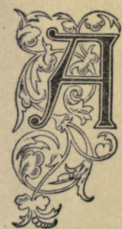
### CHAPTER I.

#### PREHISTORIC OR LEGENDARY.

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“Where are the heroes of the ages past,  
Where the brave chieftains, where the mighty ones  
Who flourished in the infancy of days?  
All to the grave gone down.”

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.



ALL ancient historians of Ireland, with the exception perhaps, of Tigernach, refer its origin to the dim prehistoric ages. Tigernach<sup>1</sup> states, “omnia Monumenta Scotorum usque Cimboeth incerta erant.” As, however, Cimboeth is supposed to have founded Armagh, B.C. 289, and taking Tigernach as the earliest reliable authority, there still remains a large limit of time within which to proceed with lessened risk of dealing in mere fiction.

All nations whose origin, like that of the Irish, does not commence with some well authenticated event, have shown the disposition to claim a remote antiquity extending beyond the earliest traditions of the human race. Pride of ancestry is a very excusable foible of human nature; for, as qualities of mind and

<sup>1</sup> Tigernach, Abbot of Clon-mac-noise, wrote the annals of Ireland partly in Latin and partly in Irish, from A.M. 3596 to his own time. A copy of these annals is in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and is amongst the most valuable of existing works referring to Irish History. Tigernach died A.D. 1088.



body are transmittible, all must feel a keen interest in the character of their direct ancestors. In pride of ancient descent the Irish do not stand alone. For boastfulness of their antiquity, the Tyrians are rebuked by Isaiah in these words: "Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle. Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days? Her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn."<sup>1</sup>

It would be of little utility to pass in review the various legends related in ancient Irish manuscripts of the peopling of Ireland before the flood, or the various extravagancies narrated by Keating, or to enumerate the many hypotheses, both ancient and modern, or the absurd tales regarding the origin of the Irish people. Such narrations might afford the same amusement as perusal of a fairy tale, but would be as little profitable. The "Annals of the Four Masters," however, being the favourite authority with Irish antiquarians, our readers ought to have the benefit of the startling information therein contained, *i.e.*, that Cæsar—not Julius, but a grand-daughter of Noah—came to Ireland forty days before the flood, with fifty girls and three men,<sup>2</sup> who consequently escaped the fate which overtook the rest of mankind; and thus was the Green Isle peopled.

An old Bishop of Ferns is reputed to have shut up "Gulliver's Travels," with the remark, "Amusing, but I can't believe half the fellow says." To this conclusion a puzzled reader might fairly come, after exploring the narratives of the old chroniclers.

The first inhabitants of Ireland are, it is conjectured, of the same stock as that which peopled Gaul, Spain, and Britain; but the immigration to England was through Gaul, whilst Ireland was peopled principally through Spain. On the Spanish littoral the Phœnicians had intermingled with the aboriginal Celts, imparting to them their arts—probably their religion also. In the reign of David and Solomon, the Phœnicians were undisputed masters of the Mediterranean and neighbouring seas, their commerce extending to the eastern shores of Spain and to Albion. Most historians admit that they planted colonies at a very early date in Ireland, and they are reputed to have enriched the mother-country by its mineral productions, though from whence

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxiii. 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup> A colony of antediluvian Mormons evidently.



drawn it is difficult to imagine, for Ireland is not now a land prolific in resources of that nature. The "Book of Ballymote" contains an ancient Irish poem, wherein we read that—

"It was Tigearnmas first established in Ireland  
The art of dyeing cloth of purple and many colours,  
And the ornamenting of drinking cups and goblets;  
And breastpins for mantles of gold and silver."

Does not this seem to refer to the celebrated Tyrian dye of which Ezekiel, prophesying against Tyre, says: "Blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was that which covered thee."<sup>1</sup> The Phœnicians were also celebrated for their workmanship in the precious metals.

Many of the ancient Irish annalists aver that Parthalon, a Scythian, sailed from Greece, and landed on the coast of Ireland, A.M. 2520, *i.e.*, 278 years after the Deluge!<sup>2</sup> During this first colonisation mention is made of a locality in the present County of Sligo. Several lakes in different parts of the kingdom are said to have then suddenly burst forth and overflowed the surrounding alluvial plains, A.M. 2532. Amongst those enumerated is Lough Teched, Teithed, or Decet, now Lough Gara, on the borders of Sligo and Roscommon. The formation of the lake must have been caused by no ordinary convulsion of nature, for Lough Gara covers nearly 5,000 acres. On its eastern side it is indented with numerous deep and narrow bays, between which are corresponding long narrow promontories.

An incident in the life of St. Patrick demonstrates the identity of Lough Teched and Lough Gara.

Being in Sligo, St. Patrick became desirous to visit Roscommon, and for this purpose he journeyed towards "the river Boyle which takes its rise in Lough Teched." Whilst crossing the river his chariot was upset in the ford, and the saint was precipitated into the flood. In consequence of this accident the ford was called *Ath-Carbuid*, the ford of the chariot. It is stated to have been close to the waterfall of *Eas-mac-n-Eirc*.

<sup>1</sup> Ezekiel xxvii. 7.

<sup>2</sup> "When the exact date of a king or dynasty anterior to Abraham is confidently given us, we may be sure we are in the region of the creative imagination."—*Goldwin Smith's Irish History and Irish Character*, p. 7.

The name of the ford is not now remembered, but the waterfall is well known; it is near Boyle, and is now called Assylin. The following wild legend in the *Dinnsenchus*<sup>1</sup> accounts for the origin of the ancient name of the lough. Teched, a skilful architect, erected *Suidhe-Aoedha*<sup>2</sup> over *Eas-ruadh*,<sup>3</sup> or the Salmon Leap, a cataract near Ballyshannon, on the river Erne. On completion of the work, he demanded as his wages the fishing of the river. This monopoly he enjoyed till the Northerners erected a fortress to prevent the dwellers in Connaught from taking salmon at the Leap. Teched, thus deprived of his right, demanded an equivalent, which was accorded to him in the shape of food and *usquebaugh* sent to his then residence, which derives its name, *Magh-Luinge*,<sup>4</sup> i.e., the plain of the eating, from this circumstance. At Magh-Luinge Teched lived happy as a king, till one day he drank to such excess that he became mad, ran to the lake, leaped in, and was drowned: the first recorded instance of *delirium tremens* in the County of Sligo. This extravagant fable clearly demonstrates not merely the derivation of the name Teched given to the lake, but also the fact that Magh-Luinge was in its immediate vicinity, the distance from one to the other not being more than *a drunken man's race*!

The first invasion of Ireland after Parthalon's colonisation was by a tribe called Fomorians: in a battle fought between them and the first arrivals, the Fomorians were defeated, and "all slain." Shortly after the battle, Parthalon's people were annihilated by a plague; so that, if these two accounts be taken in a literal sense, poor Erin must have remained without inhabitants during about thirty years, till Nemedius, another Scythian, arrived upon the Irish coast, A.M. 2850, with a new importation of adventurers, by whom and their posterity the island was possessed

<sup>1</sup> The *Book of Dinnsenchus* is supposed to have been composed in the sixth century, by Amergin, chief bard to King Dermot. This celebrated work, many additions to which have been made by later writers, contains much interesting, if not very reliable information, on ancient Irish history, topography, and the origin of the names of cities, fortresses, raths, mountains, plains, lakes, and rivers.

<sup>2</sup> Hugh's seat.

<sup>3</sup> Assaroe.

<sup>4</sup> In County of Mayo.



during a little over two centuries, or (it is well to be accurate!) during two hundred and-seventeen years.

In A.M. 2859 *Magh-n-Eabha*, or *Machaire-Eabha*, anglicé Magherow, was cleared of wood by these settlers. Not merely a fishing village as now, Magherow was then the generic name applied to the large plain in the barony of Carbury, situated between the Ben Bulbin range and the sea, and anciently celebrated for its fertility. An interpretation given of the name is that *Magh* signifies a plain, and *Eabha*, Eve, a woman's name, *i.e.*, Eve's Plain.<sup>1</sup> The country-people vary in their description of this ancient plain; some reduce it to a small tract near the sea-shore, in the middle of which stands a remarkable rock, whilst others apply the term to the entire expanse lying between Carney and Drumcliff. This plain is again mentioned in A.M. 3656, when the battle of Congnaidh was there fought by the monarch Tigearnmas.

The Fomorians, who were seafaring rovers, early hoisters of the black flag, again appear on the scene. A.M. 3060 found them established along the coasts of Ulster and Connaught. In the latter province, especially in Sligo, they were very strong; but their principal strongholds were at *Tor-Innis*, the island of the tower, now Tory Island, off the Donegal coast, and at the Giant's Causeway, that wondrous natural formation, which tradition assumes to have been built by this people, who are represented as a race of giants.

A.M. 3266, a colony of Firbolgs, who were of the same race as the Nemedians,<sup>2</sup> poured into Ireland. One of their contingents landed in Mayo, and quickly overran the neighbouring territory of Sligo. In the "*Chronicon Scotorum*"<sup>3</sup> an arrival of Firbolgs, A.M. 2358, is recorded, with, however, the serious qualification appended, "but this has not been proved." The Firbolgs, or Firvolgians, are variously supposed to be Belgæ or Scythians, who came from Greece; most generally they are considered to have been a tribe from Belgic Gaul, who settled in

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.

<sup>2</sup> O'Donovan's edition of the "*Four Masters*," p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> MS. H. I. 18, Trinity College, Dublin, published by the Lords Commissioners, and edited by W. M. Hennessy, M.R.I.A.



Meath and Leinster, but principally in Connaught, Sligo being one of their chief colonies.

Some depict the Firbolgs as strong and athletic, famous as champions and wrestlers. They are reputed to have had skulls of an elongated form, dark hair, and swarthy complexion. At a later period they are described in the "Book of Laccan,"<sup>1</sup> as "black, loquacious, lying, tale-bearing, and of low grovelling mind;" but this picture, it must be stated, was drawn by their conquerors.

The Firbolgs, on the completion of their conquest, divided Ireland into five provinces. Their principal commanders were five brothers. One of these, Geannan, ruled the territory afterwards called Connaught, from Limerick to Bundrowes in Leitrim, thus, amongst other counties, comprising the entire of Sligo. They seem to have been a simple pastoral people, and no inventions or improvements are ascribed to them, not even the clearing of woods or erection of forts. In the time of the colony of Parthalon, as also during the supremacy of the Nemedians, Fomorians, and Firbolgs, Ireland was known as *Fiodh Inis*, or the woody island, from the great forests of oak and other trees with which the country was covered, and to which frequent allusion is made when describing the appearance of the County of Sligo in days of yore.

The next wave of immigration bore on its crest the colony of the Tuatha de Danans, who are variously considered to have been Celts, Celto-Scythians, Danes, Chaldeans, Persians, Phœnicians, or Pelasgians. They are reputed to have been large of stature, fair-haired, light-complexioned, with blue or grey eyes and globular-shaped heads. They were good horsemen, fond of music, well versed in the mystic sciences, skilled in medicine, and cunning artificers, or metal-workers. According to the Bardic accounts, the rites of Magian worship, subsequently known as Druidism, were introduced into Ireland by this colony, and the accusation of magic would naturally arise from their superiority in civilisation over the Firbolgs.

MacFirbis, of Laccan, in the Parish of Kilglass, County of Sligo, in transcribing the "Chronicon Scotorum," after the entry

<sup>1</sup> So called from being compiled at Laccan, in Tireragh.

of the invasion of the Tuatha de Danans, adds: "You have heard from me, O Readers, that I like not to have the labour of writing this section imposed on me; wherefore it is that I beseech of you for the sake of true friendship not to reproach me for it (if the reason thereof is understood by you), for it is certain it is not the Clann-Firbish who are in fault." MacFirbis thus apologises for the uncertainty of the events narrated, which narration he is evidently desirous should not be attributed to negligence or ignorance, either on his own part or that of his ancestors, who were hereditary historians.

By the Bardic accounts the Firbolgs and Tuatha de Danans were of common descent. The latter seem to have followed the same line of invasion as the Fomorians, first penetrating into Ulster, from thence southwards into Leitrim, where they established themselves in fastnesses on the borders of Sligo. They raised temporary works of defence, as security from sudden attack of an enemy; then, showing themselves to the Firbolgs, pretended that they had by their skill in magic arrived on the wings of the wind.

Eochy, King of the Firbolgs, hearing of the sudden appearance of this strange tribe, sent forward to the camp of the strangers a renowned warrior of his people to obtain as much information as possible. This warrior, named Sreng, started on his mission. His approach to the camp was observed by the sentinels of the Tuatha de Danans, who immediately despatched Breas, one of their own champions, to meet him. It was then discovered that each spoke the same language. On behalf of the Tuatha de Danans, Breas proposed a division of the island between the two great parties, and after interchanging vows of friendship, each warrior returned to his people. Sreng recounted to Eochy the result of his mission, and the king decided to reject the proposal of the Tuatha de Danans to divide the country.

Meantime, in consequence of the report made by Breas to the Tuatha de Danans, of the formidable appearance and bearing of their opponents, they moved further to the South and West, and took up a position on Mount Belgarden, on the plain of Moytirra, near the village of Cong, in Mayo. The Firbolg forces also assembled, and encamped at the east end of the same plain.



Nuada, King of the Tuatha de Danans, desirous, if possible, to avoid hostilities, renewed negotiations with King Eochy, through the medium of his bards; but the Firbolg monarch declined every offer, and both sides prepared for battle. The Tuatha de Danans, by the magic arts in which they were so deeply versed, are said to have surrounded their encampment with a thick mist, under cover of which they made their dispositions for attack.<sup>1</sup> Supernatural agency need not be evoked in these days to produce a dense fog in the climate of Ireland. The battle commenced on Midsummer's Day, and continued four successive days, when the Firbolgs were defeated with great slaughter, their numbers being diminished to three hundred fighting men, headed by their chief, Sreng. They then resolved, according to the custom of the age, to demand combat of man to man; but dreading the courage arising from despair, the Tuatha de Danans offered to the chief of the Firbolgs, Sreng,<sup>2</sup> terms of peace, giving a choice of the five great divisions of Ireland in which to take up their abode, and he selected the present Province of Connaught.

Eochy, the Firbolg king, who before the conclusion of this peace had left the battle-field with a body-guard of one hundred men, in search of water to assuage his burning thirst, was followed by a party of 150 of his enemies, led by the three sons of Nemedh, who pursued him as far as the strand called Traigh-Eothaile, now Beltra Strand, near Ballysodare, County of Sligo. Whilst crossing the sands the Firbolgs were overtaken by their pursuers; a fierce combat ensued, and King Eochy was killed, as also the three sons of Nemedh, *i.e.*, Cesarb, Luamh, and Luachra, leaders of the pursuing Tuatha de Danans. These latter were buried at the west end of the strand, at a place since called *Leca Mic Nemedh*, or the grave-stone of the sons of Nemedh. King Eochy was buried on the spot where he fell, and the heap of stones on the strand, the site of which is known to this day as the Cairn of Traigh-Eothaile, was raised over

<sup>1</sup> Keating's History.

<sup>2</sup> During the battle, Sreng dealt his adversary, Nuada, King of the Tuatha de Danans, a blow which severed his arm at the shoulder. Certain ingenious artificers made him a silver arm: hence he is always known as Nuada the silver-handed.

him. It is on the sea-shore near *Cuil-Chnamh*, as recorded by the poet:—

“ *Cuil-Chnamh*,<sup>1</sup> the land where on the shore  
Lies Eochy, Mac Erc, Mac Rinnal,  
The name shall live till time's no more,  
From famous red-armed Eochy.”<sup>2</sup>

But this Bardic-sung battle does not suffice to account for the great number of sepulchral remains that strew the townland of Carrowmore, in the district of *Cuil-irra*,<sup>3</sup> which comprises the parishes of St. John's, Killaspugbrone, and Kilmacowen.

<sup>1</sup> *Cuil-Chnamh*, i.e., the corner of the bones, a district co-extensive with the present parish of Dromard.

<sup>2</sup> Duaid MacFirbis.—Lord Roden's Copy, p. 215.

<sup>3</sup> *Cuil-irra*, the remote angle, the ancient name of this district, is still retained. Strange to say, it is not applied to any denomination of land, but lingers on in popular vernacular as the designation of the *cuil*, or angle, comprised between Sligo, Ballysodare Bay, and Lough Gill, containing the parishes of St. John's, Killaspugbrone, and Kilmacowen.

St. John's, the *Tampulloin* of Strafford's Survey, contains the grand old abbey and St. John's Church, the tower of which is very ancient. There are the remains of a stone or sepulchral circle close to the west wall of Abbeyview Garden, and bordering the road.

Killaspugbrone, i.e., the Church of Bishop Brone, is so designated from an old church now in ruins on the townland of the name, close to the sea-shore. The doorway of this church, observes Petrie, furnishes an example of a semi-circular arch, but without the impost, and the jambs not, as usual, inclined. This doorway is placed in the south wall, a deviation from custom rendered necessary by the situation of the church on the sea-shore, and its consequent exposure to the prevailing westerly winds. The church, with the exception of the doorway, is of rude construction. In the “Life of St. Patrick,” frequent mention is made of Bishop Brone, who died A.D. 511, according to the annals. In the beginning of this century, a village adjacent to the church was gradually engulfed by the blowing sand, and its inhabitants compelled to remove. In the townland of Primrose Grange are still the remains of what is said to have been an old nunnery.

Kilmacowen, the Church of MacOwen. In this parish are situated all the remarkable remains of the prehistoric battle-field of Carrowmore, alluded to above. Close to the old church, now in ruins, is St. Patrick's Well, and a stone bearing on it a supposed impression of the saint's knee, retaining apparently also a specimen of his blood, as the people formerly imagined, from the rust-like colour of the rock. In the townland of



Why is that narrow strip of country so thickly strewn with monuments of the dead? The solution of the problem is difficult. The statement that the Fírbolgs, after their defeat, erected these monuments over their slain, is incredible; they were closely pursued, and could not have carried their wounded and dead such a distance. Their king left the battle-field of Cong with a guard of only one hundred men, and he was killed and buried on the strand near Ballysodare.

In 1837, Petrie, the celebrated antiquarian, counted in Carrowmore sixty-four circles, besides other sepulchral remains, comprising a large *Caltragh*, or pagan graveyard, and he supposed the former number to have been probably 200. Ferguson is of opinion that the original number was about 100;<sup>1</sup> but the destruction of these interesting remains progresses so rapidly, that it would be difficult to decide which of the two conjectures as to the original number of circles has the preponderance of evidence in its favour. The number and magnitude of the monuments, joined to the fact that several interments have been found in one tomb,<sup>2</sup> place it out of the question that they could

Templenabree are the slight remains of ruins, called *Templena-galleaghdoo*. When treating of the district of *Cuil-irra*, mention of the Devil's Punchbowl must not be omitted. It is a small lake, situated in a singular depression of the ground in the townland of Carrowkeel. It is a well-known locality, and a favourite meet of the County of Sligo Hounds. In Christian times the Devil seems to possess proprietary rights in many objects which once belonged to the *Tuatha de Danans*, or fairies. The Church regarded them as evil spirits: hence places which once were named after the fairies have been transferred to the Devil. This is the origin of such titles as Devil's Punchbowls, Devil's Dykes, Devil's Jumps, &c.

<sup>1</sup> "Rude Stone Monuments," p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> In one of these tombs were found *six distinct interments* to the east and west of the cromlech, but the central space was empty. A freestone flag formed the floor of the inner tomb. The bones were not enclosed in urns, but reposed in small heaps. The base of each heap was composed of the half-calcined remains of the smaller bones, over which were laid the larger bones, such as those of the arm, leg, and thigh. The skull formed the summit of the pile, and some of the bones showed no trace of fire. No weapon of any description was found, but a quantity of the bones of birds and of the lower mammalia; also small shells surrounded the funeral piles.

be commemorative of King Eochy's bodyguard; consequently some other struggle must be sought for, of which these monuments may be memorials.

Whilst Nuada, King of the Tuatha de Danans, was suffering from the effects of the loss of his arm, Breas, the celebrated champion, whose father was a Fomorian, was made regent. Breas soon rendered himself very unpopular, owing to his domineering disposition and penurious habits. Just when discontent was at the highest, a poet and satirist, named Cairbre, arrived at the court. In place of the customary reception accorded to his profession, his treatment was of the most penurious and niggardly description. Cairbre's angriest feelings were aroused, and he departed in disgust, but wrote so stinging a satire against his miserly host that the blood of his chiefs boiled with indignation, and they deposed Breas from the regency.

Accompanied by his mother, and filled with wrath, Breas retired to the court of his father, Elatha, the great chief of the Fomorians, or sea-rovers, who then "*swarmed through all the German Ocean, and ruled over the Shetland Islands and the Hebrides.*"<sup>1</sup> Elatha acceded to his son's request for aid, and furnished him with a fleet and army to conquer the country from the Tuatha de Danans. Assisted by the two great Fomorian chiefs, Indech<sup>2</sup> and Balor, Breas collected all the men and ships between Ireland and Scandinavia for the projected invasion—a fleet so vast that it is fabled to have formed an unbroken line from the Hebrides to the coast of Sligo. This armament was commanded by Balor of the Evil Eye, or Balor of the Mighty Blows, renowned as a magician. He was also a man of gigantic size and herculean strength. Throughout the West of Ireland the old natives retain vivid recollections of traditional tales in which Balor figures. Mothers frightened their children by mention of his name, which appears to have been as potent in effect

<sup>1</sup> *O'Curry's Lectures*, p. 249. Ireland and the North of Scotland, at an early period, were regarded as one territory, and the population passed freely from one island to the other, at a time "when race, not territory, was the great bond of association." Hence it comes that the deeds and memories of a great warrior race belong equally to both countries. Each has its songs and its legends about the self-same heroes; each has its local names taken from the same mythology.

<sup>2</sup> Indech was a celebrated Fomorian magician, grandfather of Balor.



as that of Cromwell in more modern times; and certainly if Balor could be conjured up to view as depicted by tradition, his appearance would not be calculated to lull the cries of infancy. He was reputed to have one eye in the middle of the forehead, the other being directly opposite in the back of the skull, which eye, with its piercing beams and venomous properties, struck people dead. Balor kept this eye covered, except when he wished to destroy his enemies by his death-giving looks. The Irish to this day speak of an "evil eye" as *Suil Bhaloir*, Balor's eye.

The body of invaders thus collected at the Hebrides was joined by the Firbolgs who had survived the battle of Moytirra Cong, and who, unwilling to submit to their conquerors, had fled to the islands on the western coast, but still looked wistfully to the rich plains of Connaught. This formidable force landed near Sligo,<sup>1</sup> and advanced into the enemy's country, to a plain or plateau called Moytirra, situated in the present parish of Kilmastranny, barony of Tirerrell. The name is still retained in Moytirra East and West, two townlands overlooking Lough Arrow. The people in the neighbourhood consider the ancient district to have been considerably larger, about five or six miles in circumference, of which the greater portion consists of high rock-strewn hills, cliffs, and narrow defiles, and is so described in the Bardic accounts. It may be inferred, from the signification of ancient townland names in the parish of Kilmastranny, the scene of the struggle,<sup>2</sup> that it was also covered with forests.

<sup>1</sup> Joyce states the place of landing to have been at *Eas-Dara*, now Ballysodare. A detachment may have also landed to the north of the town of Sligo, for the Four Masters state that *Fearsat reanna an Liagain*, a ford on the Sligo river, was so named from Liagain, a famous warrior of the Fomorians, killed there on his way to the battle of North Moytirra. Though the derivation is incorrect, still it may point to the fact of some of the invaders having landed north of Ballysodare.

<sup>2</sup> The site of the battle is still pointed out by the country-people. It is called *Farmaoil-na-b-fian*, the round hill of the giants, which epithet, in popular vernacular, generally follows Moytirra. Some time previous to 1837, one of the graves which strew the battle-field was opened. It was found to contain human remains, and a golden breastplate, made to clasp behind the neck and to protect completely the breast. It is said to have been sold to a jeweller in Dublin for a considerable amount. What a pity it was not preserved and sent to some museum!—*MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey*.

Five townland names therein commence with Derry, *i.e.*, *oak-wood*, and six imply a growth of timber.

The Tuatha de Danans assembled all their forces to resist the invaders, and the account of the preparations made by them for defence fully confirms their traditional character for skill. They were commanded by their king, Nuada of the Silver Hand, who was assisted in his dispositions for the battle by his two great generals, Daghdha and Lug. The legend recounts how these two commanders reviewed "their smiths, their *cerds*, or silver and brass-workers, their carpenters, their surgeons, their sorcerers, their cup-bearers, their druids, their poets, their witches, and their chief leaders; and there is not, perhaps, in the whole range of our ancient literature a more curious chapter than that which describes the questions which Lug put to these several classes as to the nature of the service which each was prepared to render in the battle, and the characteristic professional answer which he received from each of them."<sup>1</sup>

The opposing armies rush to the conflict. At first a cloud of whizzing javelins darkens the air; the warriors close in deadlier conflict, and their spears shiver in their hands; then they draw their swords, and fight foot to foot, covering their bodies with their shields, and nothing is heard but the clashing of the weapons and the cries of the combatants. This battle took place on the last day of October. The scale of victory was turned in favour of the Tuatha de Danans, by their superior scientific and strategic skill in continuously bringing up fresh supports. The appearance of these reinforcements was by their opponents ascribed to magic. They fabled that the chief physician of the Tuatha de Danans, Diancecht, assisted by his daughter, Ochtriuil, and his two sons, Airmedh and Mioch, had previous to the battle prepared a bath, in which they decocted all the healing herbs of the country. Over this cauldron<sup>2</sup> they continued to pronounce incantations during the struggle. The wounded, carried from the field and plunged into this bath, were immediately made whole, and returned again to face their adversaries. Unable to sustain a combat so unequal, the Fomorian were

<sup>1</sup> *O'Curry's Lectures*, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> This cauldron, like the "Stone of Destiny," was a "*fetich*," carried off by the Tuatha de Danans from Scandinavia. It was called Coirean

defeated, with the loss of their principal chiefs. Balor, struck in the Evil Eye, was killed by a stone cast at him from a sling by his own grandson, Lug. Before his fall, he had slain his chief adversary, Nuada the Silver-Handed, who thus, having first lost his arm at the battle of South Moytirra, lost his life at the battle of North Moytirra. Balor's wife, Kathleen, fought with desperation by his side, and performed prodigies of valour; but neither history nor tradition record whether this heroine survived the death of her renowned warrior husband.

The situation of the locality in which this struggle took place is laid down in the story, and has ever since been called in the written accounts, *Magh-tuireadh-na-bh-Formorach*, or the Plain of the towers or pillars of the Fomorians, to distinguish it from the previous battle-field of Moytirra Cong, fifty miles distant. No tradition lingers amongst the country-people relative to the Fomorian people, though the names of Lug and Balor are yet remembered.<sup>1</sup>

It is evident that the author of the Celtic manuscript from which the foregoing account is principally taken, and which so early as the ninth century was looked upon as a very ancient composition, considered the Fomorians and the Tuatha de Danans to be the same people, or at least as being merely two tribes of the same race, the chiefs of each being closely connected by intermarriage; and he identifies them with the Scandinavians<sup>2</sup> who played so important a part in Irish history down to the battle of Clontarf, A.D. 1014.

Many writers have sought to identify the Danans with the Danes. Ferguson looked on the theory as one of those arising from mere similarity of sound, generally very deceptive in investigations of this sort; but after his visit to Sligo, he says:—"The

Daghda, and is thus mentioned in a poem to be found, according to Keating, in the "Book of Invasions":—

"The Tuatha de Danans,  
By force of potent spells and wicked magic,  
And conjurations horrible to hear,  
Could set the ministers of hell at work,  
And raise a slaughter'd army from the earth,  
And make them live, and breathe, and fight again—  
Few could their arts withstand or charms unbind."

<sup>1</sup> MS. *Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

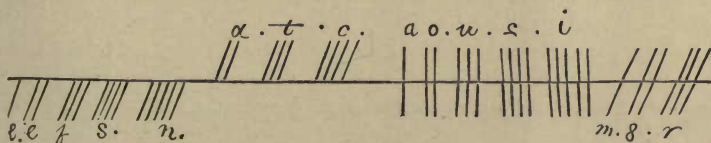
<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, p. 11, line 18.



monuments, however, on the battle-field" [of Carrowmore] "correspond so nearly to those figured by Madsen in his 'Antiquités Préhistoriques du Danemarc,' and their disposition is so similar to that of the Braavalla Feld and other battle-fields in Scandinavia, that it will now require very strong evidence to the contrary to disprove an obvious and intimate connection." The fight on Braavalla Feld took place about A.D. 735; the sepulchral remains there erected, if transported to Moytirra Cong or Carrowmore, could not be distinguished from the Irish remains. The similarity is so great that it is difficult to account for the fact of the period of the two battles being separated by seven centuries, though there are differences in form, such as triangles and other devices which show Braavalla to be of more modern date.

The Four Masters give A.M. 3303 as the date of the battle of South Moytirra, and the second battle twenty-seven years afterwards. The best antiquaries are agreed that alphabetical writing was unknown in Ireland before the time of Cormac-Mac Art, A.D. 218-266, although Ogham<sup>1</sup> characters existed long

<sup>1</sup> Ogham writing has been found only in the form of tomb inscriptions; neither does it seem capable of being adapted to chronicle elaborate detailed histories, or long, flowery, poetic compositions. It has generally been considered as druidical, as the original literary character of Pagan Ireland; and in corroboration of this theory, it has been observed that the majority of Ogham inscriptions hitherto brought to light have been obtained from undoubted heathen localities. In Petrie's opinion, the Druidic origin of Ogham writing was a theory which still remained to be proved. Maurice O'Giblan, Canon of Achonry, who died A.D. 1328, is stated to have been the most learned man in Ireland in expounding the ancient and modern laws, both canon and civil. He was also Professor of Poetry and *Ogham Writing*. The art of decyphering Ogham inscriptions was long lost, but some degree of light has been thrown upon the obscurity which formerly enshrouded them. To the Rev. J. A. French, Rector of Drumcliff, the writer is indebted for the following alphabet of Ogham characters, sixteen letters, four arrangements of strokes upon a line on stone, discovered in the cave of Dunloe, Killarney, Co. Kerry, in 1838:—



before that date. Petrie, in his "History of Tara," states that the Irish were unacquainted with letters till about the fifth century, and here the question arises: "Before the introduction of writing into a country, how long could so detailed a narrative as that which we possess of the battles of Moytirra, and one so capable of being verified by material evidences on the spot, be handed down orally as a plain prose narrative? Among so rude a people as the Irish avowedly then were, would this period be one century, or two, or how many?"<sup>1</sup>

It seems absolutely impossible that the date of the battle can be so remote as stated by the Four Masters; A.M. 3330, the date given by them, is equivalent to about B.C. 1869, but no dependence can be placed upon their chronology. Ireland, from the remotest period, has always been divided into numerous petty kingdoms; so the compilers of the annals had an abundance of names of chiefs at their disposal; and instead of treating them as contemporary, wrote them out consecutively till they reached back to Noah. Ferguson, after a lengthened analysis of the question, came to the conclusion that the two battles in question took place within either the fifty years preceding or the fifty years following the birth of Christ. Whatever opinion may be formed regarding the date of the battle of North Moytirra, there can be little doubt as to the scenes of the combat. In the parish of Killadoon, Tirerrill, are ten giants' graves and cromlechs, and four pillar-stones, or ligauns, besides minor remains testifying to a battle.<sup>2</sup> In the

<sup>1</sup> "Rude Stone Monuments," p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> The first skirmish would seem to have occurred near the site of the present church of Kilmastranny, where were formerly a mound and pillar stone. Apparently the last monument northwards is in the townland of Carrickglass, and is called *Labby*, i.e., the bed, it is a very large cromlech. The pillar-stone of greatest size, called Eglone, stands near the village of Highwood; it is nearly nineteen feet in height, measures eleven ft. six in. on two of its sides, and about eight feet on the other two. Calculating the limestone at 158 lbs. per cubic foot, there is the enormous weight of considerably over 100 tons. No remains are visible, as far as the writer could discover, of any circle on the battle-field of Moytirra.

Picture the west coast of Ireland as the coast of Norway or Iceland; each long arm of the Atlantic which indents its shore filled with solid ice; great sheets of ice spread far and wide over the mountains and lowlands of the

townland of Carrickard, about a mile from the townland of Moytirra, is an eminence still called Moytirra; and in the neighbouring parish, close to the battle-field, is a locality called *Suidh-Lughaid*, Lughaid's Seat, where, it is said, giants congregated in times of old. In fact, the monuments in Tirerrill, *so far as they go*, are confirmatory of the legend. But the battle of North Moytirra was a great and decisive battle, one in which considerable numbers were engaged; in short, a battle which formed a turning-point in the history of the country. It must cause surprise that the collection of Megalithic remains in Tirerrill is not of *extent* sufficient to mark the site of a struggle so important in results, and in which such vast numbers were engaged. The enigma, however, is at once solved, if to the monuments in Tirerrill we add those in Carrowmore, where the defeated and fugitive Fomorians most probably met their final overthrow. The large invading army landed on the coasts of Sligo, and advanced into the country. They came in contact with, and were defeated by, the Tuatha de Danans at Moytirra in Tirerrill. A defeated force of invaders would naturally fall back upon their shipping, and with that object the direct line of retreat from Moytirra in Tirerrill would be through the district of Cuil-irra,<sup>1</sup> in the very heart of which lies Carrowmore, the spot so thickly strewn with sepulchral monuments, the most

country: this ice not stationary, but increased by fresh snow-falls, constantly gliding little by little from the highlands to the sea, rubbing and rounding the surface of the rocks on which it rests. In this manner the rocks which strew Carrowmore were carried many miles; those which had fallen from the cliffs of the inland mountains travelled slowly but surely to *Cuil-irra*, there to be deposited, and the rounded, polished, globular, quartzite boulders to be utilised by the aborigines long ages afterwards for sepulchral monuments. In Moytirra the blocks seem to have been deposited on the earth, unaffected by grinding action; they are huge rectangular blocks of grey magnesian limestone, and are comparatively fewer in number, though of vastly greater size, than at Carrowmore. Might not this serve to explain the difference in the character of the monuments? In Moytirra the aborigines, with rude materials ready at hand, formed the cromlech, the grave, and stone pillar, but had not wherewithal to construct the surrounding circle. In Carrowmore those conditions were reversed.

<sup>1</sup> Foot-note, *ante* p. 12, demonstrates that some of the invaders landed to the north of Sligo.



numerous and important in Ireland. The Irish manuscript from which this account of the battle of North Moytirra is taken appears to be imperfect at the end. O'Curry accounts for this by the surmise that it had probably contained a description of the setting up of the tombs, pillars, and cyclopean graves and monuments in Tirerrill; but may not the author of the manuscript equally be supposed to have closed his narrative by recounting the retreat of the defeated army from the battle-field of Moytirra, the vigorous pursuit, the rally of the Fomorians to cover their embarkation, their last desperate struggle, and final rout at Carrowmore. A very remarkable cairn on a neighbouring hill overlooks this scene. According to the ideal of a warrior's grave, as given by Beowulf in the fifth century, nothing could more perfectly correspond to his description than the cairn on Knocknarea.<sup>1</sup>

“ Then wrought  
The people of the Westerns  
A mound over the sea ;  
It was high and broad,  
By the sea-faring man  
To be seen afar.”

A Longfellow might easily conjure up the apparition of an old Viking starting from the tomb, and directing his history to be properly recorded :—

“ I was a Viking old !  
My deeds, though manifold,  
No skald in song has told,  
No saga taught thee.”

The hill on which stands this cairn, or misgaun, rises to a height of 1,078 feet. On the one side, in close proximity, is Carrowmore; on the other side the hill rises almost straight from the sea-line, and the observer has thus the full benefit of its elevation. The misgaun, even from a considerable distance,

<sup>1</sup> Charles O'Connor, of Balanagar, in one of his unpublished letters, states the Irish name of the hill to be *Cnoc-na-re*, the hill of the moon, and he conjectured that it was so called from the ancient inhabitants having performed their Neomenia, or devotions to the new moon, on the cairn on its summit. By nearly every other authority this hill is called *Cnoc-na-riagh*, the hill of the executions.—*MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

forms a very striking feature of the landscape, standing distinctly against the sky-line. It commands a splendid panoramic view, a prospect wide and varied of the county in every direction; the mountains of Donegal, as well as the entire Sligo range, being distinctly visible from the summit.

The cairn was described by the Rt. Hon. William Burton in 1779 as an enormous heap of small stones, oval in figure, its circumference 650 feet at the base; on the one side a slope of 79, and on the other of 67 feet; the area on the top in its longest diameter 100 feet, and 85 feet in its shortest. When Petrie visited it in 1837 it was only 590 feet in circumference, and the longest diameter on the top but 80 feet; it had in the interval been used as a quarry. Around its base are the remains of many sepulchral monuments of lesser importance. A careful excavation within these tombs resulted in the discovery not only of human interments, but also of several rude ornaments and implements of stone of a similar character to those usually found in sepulchres of this class in Ireland, and which identify the group of monuments as of contemporaneous age with those of Carrowmore, and mark them as belonging to any period of semi-civilised society in Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

On the completion of their conquest, the Tuatha de Danans divided Ireland into three parts, and appointed a king over each. They ruled the kingdom during two centuries,<sup>2</sup> and were in their turn overcome by the Milesian or Scotie race. The Firbolgs,

<sup>1</sup> Stokes' "Life of Petrie," p. 256. There is good reason for doubting the tradition that the large cairn or misgaun is the tomb of Queen Meave. There is the direct testimony of a commentary written by Moelmuiri, that "Meave was buried at Rathcroghan, which was the proper burying-place of her race, her body having been removed by her people from Fort Meave, for they deemed it more honourable to have her interred at Croghan." As the "Book of the Cemeteries" confirms this, there seems no good reason for doubting the fact.

<sup>2</sup> During the rule of the Tuatha de Danans, Ireland was called *Innis-fail*, the Isle of Destiny, so termed from *Lia-fail*, the Stone of Destiny, which the legends recount they brought with them and held in the highest veneration. Seated on it, the ancient monarchs of Ireland, both in Pagan and Christian times, were inaugurated. This supposed magic stone was in the ninth century sent to Scotland, in order to secure the then dynasty on the throne, an ancient tradition having induced the

having assisted the Milesians to subdue the Tuatha de Danans, were in recompense restored to a great part of their former possessions in Connaught, especially in Sligo, where they were ruled by their own chiefs till the third century, at which period Cormac MacArt attacked and defeated Hugh, son of Garadh, King of Connaught, the last ruler of the Firbolg race. They never re-acquired power, but sank to the position of farmers and peasants. The majority of the population of Connaught is generally considered to be of Firbolg descent. There are accounts of many battles between the Milesians and the Firbolgs, who were with difficulty kept in subjection—in a state of vassalage—their Milesian masters ruling as the aristocracy. Some Firbolg tribes who were tributary to Carbry, King of Leinster, held from him extensive tracts of land, for which he exacted such excessive rents that they abandoned their tribal territories and moved into Connaught, where they obtained pasturage on reasonable terms from Oilíoll and Meave, king and queen of that province. Rack rents thus appear to date from an early period of Irish history.

The various races or tribes which peopled Sligo being now recorded, the next point is to consider the traces they have left behind them. Their dwellings and their sepulchral monuments prominently demand notice.

Their dwellings were termed (1) *Raths*<sup>1</sup> and (2) *Cashels*.<sup>2</sup>

belief that the Scotie race should rule only so long as this magic stone, taken from the Tuatha de Danans, was in their possession. The translation of an old Irish distich says :—

“ If Fate’s decrees be not announced in vain,  
Where’er this stone is kept the Scots shall reign.”

It was preserved with the greatest care in Scone, in Perth. On it the monarchs of Scotland were crowned till the year 1296, when Edward, King of England, having overrun Scotland, carried off from the cathedral of Scone, as a trophy of victory, the Stone of Destiny, which he placed under the coronation chair, where it still remains, in Westminster Abbey. On it all our monarchs have since been crowned, and in the person of our present gracious sovereign, the Scottish race reigns where the Stone of Destiny is kept.

<sup>1</sup> Rath, Dun, and Lis, whatever may originally have been the distinction, are all now synonymous.

<sup>2</sup> Caisel, Cashel, and Cathair are also synonymous.



(1.) *Raths* are the circular earthen ramparts formerly surrounded by a deep fosse or ditch, of which remains, in a more or less perfect state are to be found all over the kingdom; they are, for the most part, situated on hills,<sup>1</sup> and Sligo comprises within its area a larger proportion of raths than any other district of like extent in the kingdom. There are 1,882 of these forts<sup>2</sup> in the county. The barony of Carbury, in proportion to its size, contains the largest number of forts, being 407 within an area of 78,000 acres; Coolavin, with 29,000 acres, has 61 forts; Leyny, with 121,000 acres, 496; Tirerrill, with 79,000 acres, 359; Corran, with 45,000 acres, 206; and Tireragh, with 106,000 acres, 357 forts. Some of these circular fortresses are peculiar. In the townland of Lugnamackan, *the hollow of the parsnips*, there is a trefoil arrangement<sup>3</sup> like the leaf of a shamrock; not far from this are three raths, forming a cable-chain pattern. In Tireragh there are remains of a few forts, square in form, possibly of less ancient origin. Some forts have but a single rampart, others have two, or even three ramparts; the ordinary extent of ground enclosed within the fortifications

<sup>1</sup> Lisnalurg, *the fort of the hollow*, near the town of Sligo, a famous find for the Sligo Hounds, is a remarkable exception to this rule, the ramparts enclosing a cup-like depression of the ground.

<sup>2</sup> The forts have been carefully counted, and the greatest attention given to avoid, if possible, the most trifling inaccuracy. They are distributed in parishes, as follows, but it is possible that some of these remains may be of sepulchral origin.

*Barony of Carbury*.—Ahamlish, 144; Rossinver, 22; Drumcliff, 65; Calry, 54; St. John's, 45; Kilmacowen, 34; Kilaspugbrone, 43.

*Barony of Coolavin (Half)*.—Kilcolman, 9; Kilfree, 32; Killaraght, 20.

*Barony of Leyny*.—Achonry, 231; Ballysodare, 51; Killoran, 89; Kilmacteige, 70; Kilvarnet, 55.

*Barony of Tirerrill*.—Aghanagh, 25; Ballynakill, 30; Ballysodare (*part of*), 35; Ballysummaghan, 41; Drumcolumb, 27; Killadoon, 30; Killerry, 26; Kilmaccallan, 69; Kilmastranny, 32; Kilross, 13; Shancough, 10; Tawnagh, 21.

*Barony of Corran*.—Cloonoghill, 39; Drumrat, 22; Emlaghfad, 55; Kilmorgan, 26; Kilshalvy, 17; Kilturra, 23; Tomour, 24.

*Barony of Tireragh*.—Castleconor, 27; Dromard, 67; Easky, 32; Kilglass, 42; Kilmacshalgan, 40; Kilmoremoy, 25; Skreen, 67; Templeboy, 57.

<sup>3</sup> *Ordnance Sheet*, 20.

varies from a rood to half an acre, but there are raths much larger, containing from one to two acres. They may be divided into three classes: (i.), those for the penning of flocks and herds at night, to protect them from wolves and marauders; (ii.), the fortified residences of the smaller chiefs; and (iii.), those of the head chiefs or provincial kings. Perfect classification seems now impossible; but it may safely be assumed that those with two or more ramparts were for defence, or the headquarters of chiefs. These raths are very commonly called Danish forts, from a tradition that they were erected as strongholds by the Danes; yet many thousands are found in remote parts, where the Danes either had not penetrated or had no possessions. The raths must have been erected principally by the Tuatha de Danans and the Milesians. Many raths have been levelled, yet at least thirty thousand still remain in Ireland, preserved from destruction by the peasantry, who entertain the traditional belief that it is unlucky to meddle with them, misfortune being always the result. This childish dread, rather than veneration for antiquities, has tended to the preservation of the forts. The Tuatha de Danans, when in their turn conquered by the Milesians, are fabled to have retired to underground dwellings, and by magic arts to have existed in the interior of the raths and green knolls; gradually dwindling in size by living underground, they were then called "good people," or fairies, and as ghosts of a hostile though conquered race they were dreaded but not revered; they became objects of a strange fear, and the amount of mischief ascribed to them in the imagination of the peasantry was wonderful, considering the very small stature assigned to these fairies. Like Puck, they were said to—

" Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,  
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn,  
And sometimes make the drink to bear no barm,  
Mislead night wanderers, laughing at their harm."

They were represented to be also a jealous little race, who bore ill-will against anyone speaking badly of them, or even naming them at all; they resented any slight to their dignity with marked disapprobation; and yet a libation of *beestheens*, or the thick new milk given by the cow just after calving, if poured



on their favourite resort, was believed to appease their anger. They were supposed to issue by moonlight from their underground dwellings, and disport themselves on the green sward of the raths; and if espied by earthly being, they would endeavour to entice him to visit their abode, from which the explorer was never permitted to return<sup>1</sup>—

“ The fairies are dancing by brake and by bower,  
For this, in their land, is the merriest hour ;

Their steps are soft, and their robes are light,  
And they trip it at ease in the clear moonlight ;

Their queen is in youth and in beauty there,  
And the daughters of earth are not half so fair.

. . . . .

She will take thee to ramble by grove and by glen,  
And the friends of thy youth shall not know thee again.”

Within the circular rampart of the raths stood anciently the residence or dwelling of the chief, near which, but outside the enclosure, clustered the village of the clan, just as in England the hamlet clung for protection to the outworks of the frowning Norman fortress.

(2.) *Cashels* were circular enclosures, similar to the raths, but built of stone; they were not nearly so numerous in Sligo as the raths; the best example is that in the island of Inishmurray, off the Sligo coast, and another good specimen is Cashel Bawn, which formed one of a chain of forts that ran along the foot of the Ben-Bulbin range of mountains. “It is almost circular in form, being seventy-eight feet in diameter from east to west, and seventy-six from north to south. The wall seems to have been single. In the lower part, the stones of which it is formed are large. The inner face of the wall is perfect to the

<sup>1</sup> This at once calls to mind Scott’s description of the Pictish fort in which Marmion met his overthrow—

“ The moor around is brown and bare,  
The space within is green and fair ;

. . . . .

But woe betide the wand’ring wight  
That treads its circle in the night !”



height of six or eight feet. There are no small stones in it, but it is built of limestone boulders, which were probably the material nearest at hand; the mass of the wall merely consists of rubble very loosely put together."

The doorway was on the eastern side. Only one of the lower stones is now remaining, and this measures three feet eight inches in width. Here the wall is thirteen feet in thickness, and the doorway was, consequently, of this depth. It grows narrower on the inner than on the outer side. There is no trace of any flight of steps in the wall leading to a banquette, but there is a passage on the west side in the thickness of the wall. Altogether, the fort is totally different from those in the Arran Islands, and very inferior in construction."<sup>1</sup>

The sepulchral remains of the aborigines, like those of all primitive peoples, are more important, as well as interesting, than their habitations.<sup>2</sup> The mortuary traces left are (i.) *Sepulchral Mounds*, (ii.) *Cairns*, (iii.) *Cromlechs*, (iv.) *Pillar Stones*, (v.) *Rocking Stones* (vi.) *Stone Circles*.

(i.) *Sepulchral Mounds*<sup>3</sup> or Tumuli, commonly called "moats" in Ireland, and "barrows" in England, are of various sizes, and of circular or conical form, having the appearance of hillocks; some are simple mounds of earth, others contain small stone chambers or cists, others again, have megalithic chambers with or without external access. When opened they have been found to contain funeral urns, remains of human bones, military weapons, &c., showing them to have been places of sepulture for kings, chiefs, and warriors. This mode of interment was practised even after the introduction of Christianity.

(ii.) *Cairns*, so called from the Irish word signifying a heap or pile of stones, are frequently of immense size, containing many thousand cubic yards of these materials, and usually placed on high hills; the *Misgaun* on the summit of Knocknarea is the best example; the cairn at Heapstown, however, is on low-

<sup>1</sup> "Notes on Irish Architecture," by Lord Dunraven, Vol. i., p. 17. The cashel is situated in the townland of Cashelgarron.

<sup>2</sup> They had also another form of habitation i.e., lake dwellings, described in the next chapter.

<sup>3</sup> Mounds and raths so closely resemble each other as to be easily confounded.

lying ground, it is situated in the parish of Kilmacallan, barony of Tirerrill, close to Lough Arrow, and is said to be the burial-place of Oilíoll, King of Connaught, in the fourth century; the stones forming it are somewhat larger than those in the cairn on Knocknarea, which it closely resembles, but to which, though superior in height, it is inferior in circumference. Leacht and Taimleacht are synonymous terms, applied to lesser monumental heaps erected for the same purpose as the cairn.

(iii.) *Cromlechs*, from *Crom-leac*, i.e., sloping-stone, a word of Welsh importation, was not originally the term applied to these monuments. Many antiquaries have called them "Druids' Altars," on which were said to be offered up human victims to appease the wrath of the gods; but the popular term of "Giants' Graves," to which the peasantry still adhere as—

" Reared by the hands of giants  
For the god-like kings of old,"

seems to be nearer the truth.

Cromlechs are generally composed of three, four, or six high pillar stones, placed upright, and fixed deep in the earth on their smaller ends; they vary in height from five or six to eight or ten feet; on the top is a long slab or table-stone, generally placed in a sloping position, hence the name of the monument. Many cromlechs are placed on lofty hills; and when so situated, are called in Sligo, as in some other parts of Ireland, "Dermod and Grainné's Bed," which connect them with a well-known legend. Remains of human bones, funeral urns, and other mortuary traces have been discovered on excavating under them, thus demonstrating conclusively their sepulchral character.

(iv.) *Pillar Stones*, called in Irish gallauns or leagauns, are upright stones unchiselled, variously supposed to be sepulchral monuments, idol stones, memorial stones, land-marks or boundary stones. They differ greatly in size.

(v.) *Rocking Stones*, although by some considered evidences of Druidical worship, may be looked on as simply natural phenomena. One of these rocking stones is situated not far from Ballina, one near Lough Talt, County of Sligo, and one reputed to be in Kilmorgan, but the writer has been unable to identify it.



Rocking Stones are mentioned by Pliny, who thus describes one—"Juxta Haspasus oppidum Asiæ, cautes stat horrenda uno digiti mobilis, eadem si toto corpore impellatur resistens." A slight push produces an oscillation, not fitful or irregular, but like the beating of a pendulum, and always in proportion to the force applied; hence, they could not well have been divination stones, for the answer must always have been alike. The phenomena may be explained by denudation. The agency of water would suffice to account for the gradual removal of the earth originally surrounding these stones, on the same principle that the surrounding ice, having been melted away by the action of the sun, rocking stones are seen on the surface of the Swiss glaciers. If a great block of stone fall from the cliffs on to the surface of the glacier, the ice which it covers is protected from the sun's rays, therefore does not melt; and whilst the general level of the glacier sinks, the stone remains eventually balanced on the summit of a pedestal of ice, the height of which is in proportion to the activity of the fusion during the summer heats.

(vi.) *Stone Circles*, being commemorative monuments to chiefs fallen in battle, may be said to mark the site of ancient battle-fields. They consist of stones, rough and unhewn, placed in triple, double, or single circles—circles surrounding tumuli, circles surrounding cromlechs.<sup>1</sup>

The following detailed descriptions of the stone sepulchres which strew the battle-fields of Carrowmore have been carefully noted on the spot, and compared with the account given by Petrie in 1836.<sup>2</sup>

The principal group at Carrowmore, consisting now of about sixty-five monuments, is situated on an elevated table-land, extending not more than a mile in one direction, and about half a mile in the other. Within the space is congregated almost every variety of Megalithic work; stone cairns with sepulchral chambers in their interiors, cromlechs standing alone, which evi-

<sup>1</sup> "That these monuments are wholly sepulchral must, I think, be at once obvious, and this is the only origin assigned them in the ancient and living traditions of the country, nor are they known by other names than those which support those traditions, as *Leaba-na-b-fian*, the graves of the warriors, and *Leaba-na-Fearmore*, the graves of the giants." *MS. Letters of Petrie*.

<sup>2</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*



dently have never been covered over with either earth or stones; cromlechs, some with single, others with two or three circles of stones around them, circles without any sepulchre appearing in the centre. The only form absent is the avenue, of which no trace can be found. The collection of circles, observed as a whole, seems also to approach pretty nearly to a circular disposition. The map and the description of these monuments elucidate the distribution of these remains, and the numeral prefixed to each in the text corresponds with that marked on the plan.

1. The first to be brought under notice is the chain of circles situated to the north of the road leading from Seafield to Sligo, of which that marked No. 1 is the most western. It forms an elevated platform, of which the outer circle, 40 feet in diameter, was formed by stones of very large size, thirty-five in number in 1837, but several have of late been removed. There was formerly an inner circle of smaller stones, in the centre a broken cromlech, no longer existing, beneath which human bones were found.

2. Situated six paces to the N.E. of the preceding, and 52 feet in diameter. The greater number of the stones which formed this circle have been removed, but the few remaining are of great size. Human bones were discovered within this circle.

2\*. Five large upright stones in a group, at a distance of about 40 feet to the N.E. of Circle No. 2, were removed and built into the wall along the road-side. These five stones were unquestionably the uprights or supports of the cromlech of another circle.

3. No. 3 circle is situated a few paces to the N.E. of the preceding. It is 40 feet in diameter, and consisted of thirty-four stones, of which four have been displaced. The upper stone of the cromlech, 4 feet long, 1 ft. 6 in. thick, and 12 feet in circumference, has been thrown off its supports. The chamber of this cromlech was searched, and an interment found within. There was also an outer circle, formed of very large stones, twelve in number, of which only six now remain.

3\*. Between No. 3 and the next to be noticed, there were in 1837 several upright stones forming a curved line, apparently the remains of another circle.

4. This circle is situated a short distance to the N.E. of the preceding. The diameter of the circle is 40 feet, and the number of stones appears to have been originally forty, of which twenty-one remained in 1837, but now only one is to be seen. The cromlech is in a perfect state, and is formed of five supporting and one table-stone, altogether about 5 feet in height, and the table-stone 14 feet in circumference.

5. Of No. 5 circle, in 1837 only eight stones remained in their original position, and the cromlech was then gone. The diameter of the circle was apparently the same as that last noticed, only fourteen paces distant to the N.E. The stones of which it was composed are now built into the wall of the field.

6. Circle and cromlech were both destroyed in 1815. Its situation was N.E. of No. 5.

6\*. Between No. 6 and the circle next to be noticed were several very large stones, which must have belonged to another circle.

7. Situated to the N.E. of the preceding. Both circle and cromlech are perfect. The diameter of the circle is 37 feet, the number of stones composing it 32. The cromlech is about 8 feet high; the table-stone, which rests on six supporting stones of great magnitude, is 9 feet in length and 23 feet in circumference. This cromlech and circle, being situated on the ridge of a hill, produce a very striking and picturesque effect. It is the largest and most complete of the series.

7\*. Between No. 7 and the following were formerly several large stones, remains of another circle.

8. No. 8 circle is 90 feet in diameter, and is most probably sepulchral, although having somewhat the appearance of a *Raheen*. The surrounding stones are nearly buried in the clay bank. There are no remains of a cromlech within it.

9. No. 9 is situated still farther to the N.E., and consists now of ten remarkably large stones; it may be doubted if there were ever more than twelve. Diameter, 42 feet. There are no remains of a cromlech.

10. This circle, situated to the N.E. of the last, is in part destroyed; but judging from the portion which remains, it must have been very large. Apparently it consisted of but twelve stones, of which eight remain, and are of unusually great size.



The diameter of the circle is 75 feet. The cromlech, now quite ruined, was originally of corresponding magnitude. An interment was found beneath it.

11. This circle is situated to the S.W. of the preceding. Only four stones now remain in their original position. The remainder, together with the cromlech (a single supporting stone alone remaining to mark its site), were destroyed about the year 1830.

11\*. Between No. 11 and the road are several very large stones, which, with others that were blasted, formed another circle. Here the chain of circles towards the north appears to end.

12. This circle, situated near the road, and E.N.E. of No. 9, was originally composed of small stones mixed with earth, and was about 40 feet in diameter, with a stone sepulchre in the centre, but no cromlech. The whole is now so covered with sod, that but for Petrie's description of its state in 1837, it might pass unnoticed. Not far off, lying between it and Caltragh, is apparently the remains of another circle. (12\*.)

13. This circle, situated to the S.E. of No. 7, has been destroyed by the road passing through it. As frequently occurs in such cases, some of the largest stones have been removed to form part of the road wall. The cromlech, however, remains, and is a fine specimen of its kind. The table-stone is 20 feet in circumference, supported by six stones. To the west are four more stones, adding length to the grave.

14. Of No. 14, situated at the corner of the road to the south of the preceding, only two stones remain, now half buried. Every other trace of the circle, the cromlech included, has disappeared.

15. No. 15 was a double circle, about 40 feet in diameter, situated on a mound to the east of the road. A portion of the outer circle has been destroyed, only seventeen stones remaining, and the cromlech has now vanished. It had been searched, and human bones found in it.

16. Situated on a mound immediately south of the preceding, and adjoining the road. This was also a double circle of about the same diameter as No. 15. The outer circle is nearly destroyed, and the covering of the cromlech displaced. The



circumference of the flag is 13 feet ; length, 4 ft. 4 in., and 1 ft. 6 in. thick. Both Nos. 15 and 16 have been greatly injured since 1837.

17. This circle is situated on the opposite or western side of the road, south of the preceding, and has been partly destroyed in forming the road. Apparently it had been a double circle, the stones of large size, the external diameter being 40 feet. The covering stone of the cromlech, 12 feet in circumference, has been displaced. Within its enclosure human bones and fragments of an urn were found.

18. This circle is twenty paces to the south of No. 17, which it greatly resembles. It is 40 feet in diameter, with an inner circle formed, as usual, of smaller stones. Of the external circle twenty-nine stones remain ; the original number seems to have been thirty-five. A cromlech, now ruined, is in the centre, and there appears to have been originally a second cromlech, or kistvaen, within the circle. Between it and the next circle to be noticed, there is every reason to believe that three or more circles have been destroyed, as alleged, by the country-people. (18 *a*, 18 *b*, 18 *c*.) The wall on the south side of the road is for some distance entirely formed of boulders, such as generally compose stone circles.

19. This circle, to the south of No. 18, is one of the grandest now remaining. It is a raised mound 72 feet in diameter. On the edge are forty-nine stones ; the original number had been apparently fifty-two, but the mound having been undermined by people searching for gravel, some of the stones to the N.W. have rolled to the bottom of the slope. The stones are all of great magnitude ; many of them stand seven feet above ground. The circle had evidently contained several kistvaens, or cromlechs, of which remains are visible. There was one also outside the circle, some stones of which remain.

20. Situated about twenty paces to the south of the preceding. This circle was of very small diameter, and consisted of twelve stones, five of which had been removed prior to 1837.

21. Still further south. A few stones of the circle were in their places in 1837, but now the table-stone of the cromlech alone remains.

22. Situated to the S.E. of the preceding, and close to the

road, is a fine double circle, with a cromlech, now a total ruin, in the interior. The diameter of the outer circle is 53 feet; of the inner, 32 feet. The stones in both had been placed quite close to each other, but are now greatly displaced. The number of stones in the outer circle is now forty-five, but appears originally to have been fifty-two, as spaces for seven stones are empty. Within the cromlech an interment was found.

23. This circle is situated about fifteen paces to the south of No. 22. It is considerably injured, only seventeen stones remaining of the circle, which originally consisted of from thirty to thirty-two. The diameter is 36 feet. Human bones have been found within the cromlech, of which the stones remain, but are displaced.

24. West of the preceding are twenty-three large stones which had evidently belonged to another circle, now destroyed. These stones, rolled to the bottom of the hill in clearing the land, and placed in a row may, perhaps, be mistaken by some future antiquarian for an avenue!

25. Situated about six paces west of No. 23; of this circle only nine stones remain, and no cromlech. The diameter was originally 45 feet.

26. This circle, to the south of the preceding, and near the road, is in an almost perfect state, the cromlech or kistvaen alone is wanting. The stones are large, and placed quite close to each other; they are thirty-eight in number. The diameter of the circle is 50 feet.

27. To the S.W. of No. 26 is a double circle, one of the finest of the series. The stones of the inner circle are small, and nearly covered by the earth; those of the outer are of large size, averaging 6 feet in height, and 20 feet in circumference, the diameter of the circle 60 feet, the number of stones in the circle is thirty-seven; the pillar stones of the cromlech, sixteen in number, remain, but the covering-stone, or stones, for it is probable there were more than one, have been destroyed.

28. This circle is situated about twenty paces to the S.E. of the preceding; only a vestige remains, consisting of three stones, with the supporting stones of the cromlech. The destruction of this circle occurred prior to 1837.

29. Still more to the south; only slight vestiges of this circle

remained in 1837. Human bones were then found within the tomb.

30. This circle, with its fine cromlech, was stated by Petrie, in 1837, to have been destroyed a very short time previously. It was situated to the east of the preceding, and on the eastern side of the road. One huge stone, standing alone like a sentinel, marks where the chief reposed.

31. Situated on Leachtareal Hill, to the west of the road, and south of the preceding; only a few stones remain of this circle and cromlech, which were destroyed prior to 1837; human bones were found within the latter. The diameter of the circle was small, but the stones were of great size. Some of them are at a considerable height in the ditch of a garden on the west side of Leachtareal Hill.

32. Is situated a few paces south of the preceding, south of the lane: the cromlech is broken, but the circle, 42 feet in diameter, is nearly perfect; the stones are of smaller size than the remains of No. 31. Within the memory of old people there had been a remarkable cairn adjacent to these circles, which gave name to *Leachtareal* Hill. It was destroyed many years since, for the purpose of building walls. Not a trace of it now remains.

33, 34. Of these circles, which had been situated to the south of the preceding, but slight vestiges remain; they were destroyed about the year 1820.

35. Situated still further south, has also been destroyed, but some of the supporting stones of the cromlech remain. In the vicinity there had been other circles, now destroyed. A few stones remain scattered here and there, but nowhere sufficiently numerous to enable one to reconstruct the circle. (35,\* &c.)

36. This circle, nearly perfect, is situated west of the preceding; it now consists of forty-nine stones, of which some are thrown down or displaced; the upper stone of the cromlech has also been displaced, but lies beside its supports. The diameter of the circle is 60 feet. To the east is a knoll resembling a tumulus. (36.\*)

37. Situated to the south of No. 36 is a triple circle, and in its centre a cromlech in a perfect state, but of the smallest size; it is not more than 4 feet in height; the circumference of the



table-stone is 16 feet, and it rests on five supports. The inner circle, about 40 feet in diameter, is composed of small stones, placed quite close together, only appearing here and there above the soil. The second circle, about 80 feet in diameter, is composed of very large stones, twelve in number, placed at intervals of about six paces from each other. The third circle is composed of stones of still greater magnitude, but as several of them have been removed or destroyed, it can only be assumed that they were also twelve in number. The diameter of this circle is 120 feet.

38. Is west of the preceding, and but a few feet distant. Very few stones remain, and the cromlech is wholly destroyed. The diameter of the circle is 60 feet.

39. This circle again is but a few feet westward of the last; it is still more injured, only ten stones remaining, they are of large size. The diameter of the circle is 70 feet.

40, 41. Of Nos. 40 and 41 only a few stones remain; they were destroyed about the year 1815. Human bones were found within them.

42. The remains of this circle consist of but seven or eight stones.

43. Situated to the south of the preceding, the diameter apparently 45 feet, but the original number of the stones cannot be ascertained, many of them being covered by the earth. Immediately adjacent, towards the north, appears to be the remains of another circle. (43.\*)

44. Situated to the westward. Of this circle a few stones only remain.

45. A few stones only form the residue of this circle.

46. Situated to the west, and close to an old ditch, which has cut off a portion of the arc. This circle resembles a cashel, or fort, rather than a place of interment. The diameter is about 120 feet; and the wall, 10 feet in thickness, is composed of enormous sized stones, mixed with earth; a ditch and bank surround it; two small walls within the enclosure, extending across it in parallel lines, tend to confirm the idea of its sepulchral character.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No. 63, of clearly sepulchral character, is divided into compartments in somewhat a similar manner.

47. This circle is situated immediately west of the cashel, and is in part destroyed, about twenty stones remain, several of them displaced, and the cromlech is entirely gone. In the same field, to the N.W., there are a vast number of large stones, and the boundary is in great part composed of similar stones, but it is impossible to trace with any certainty a circular arrangement among them. Within the memory of the present inhabitants of the townlands, the chain of circles was carried on without interruption through the great field immediately to the north. They were destroyed for the purpose of clearing the ground. The men employed in their demolition, and who were interrogated by Petrie, in 1837, remembered six or more of them in existence (47\* *a*, 47\* *b*, 47\* *c*, 47\* *d*, 47\* *e*, 47\* *f*), and the stones of which they were composed remain partly in pits within the field, and partly in the surrounding field-walls. In all these circles bones were found beneath the cromlechs. Towards the north of the field the series is again resumed.

48. Of this circle, which appears to have been of great size, only one stone remains, but its cromlech is perfect. It consists of supporting stones, and a covering flag 6 feet square. The one remaining stone of the circle is about 5 feet in height, 38 feet distant from the cromlech, which would give a diameter of at least 76 feet to the circle in its perfect state.

49. Situated about eighty paces to the north of No. 48 is a double circle, with a cromlech in the centre, of which only one stone now remains. The stones in the outer circle were considerably larger than those in the inner, and appear to have consisted of thirty-two, but most of them have been removed. The stones of the inner circle are nearly covered with earth. The diameter of the circle is 38 feet.

50. The remains of this circle which, with its cromlech, was destroyed in the year 1834, consisted of twenty-four large stones. They were situated west of the great cairn next to be noticed.

51. This was formerly the most important monument of the entire series, and evidently, both from its magnitude and central situation, marks the sepulchre of the most distinguished person entombed in this great cemetery. In its present state of dilapidation it is impossible to describe with certainty its original proportions, but enough remains to approximate to the



truth ; its destruction, by exposing the interior to view, has furnished information which could not otherwise have been acquired. Its situation is more elevated than that of any of the surrounding monuments, and its circumference considerably greater, the diameter being about 150 feet. It consisted originally of two concentric circles, with a cromlech or kistvaen in the centre ; but the space enclosed by the outer circle was covered by a cairn, or heap of stones, originally, it is probable not less than 40 feet or 50 feet in height. The use of the cairn as a quarry for many years, by the neighbouring inhabitants, diminished its altitude, and finally exposed the tomb within it, which is composed of stones of great magnitude, built with an unusual degree of regularity in form. The covering-stone, 10 feet square and 2 feet thick, unlike those in *all* the other tombs, is not granite but limestone, so also are some of its supports. The persons who first opened it assert that they found nothing within it but burned wood and human bones. The half calcined bones of horses were found in the body of the cairn in great quantity. The stones which formed the outer circle were of large size, but most of them have been carried away, only a conjecture therefore can be formed as to the original number, which, allowing a breadth of 3 feet to each stone, would account for 150. This cairn is called *Listoghill*, *i.e.*, Ryefort ; but this is obviously not its original name, being founded on the erroneous supposition that the monument was a *Lis* or Fort.

52. The next monument, situated seventy paces N.W. of the cairn, was a large circle, destroyed for the building materials which it afforded. The cromlech, a very large, and apparently a double one, still remains, but is in great part covered by stones collected to clear the adjacent fields.

53. Of this, only the cromlech remains ; the circle was destroyed many years ago.

54. Of this circle but few stones remain.'

55. This circle and the cromlech, which Petrie states was tolerably perfect in 1837, is now so covered with stones, the clearing of the fields, that it is impossible to describe it. It forms a conspicuous mound close to the road, and is the last link of the external chain of circles which commences at No. 1. Any intermediate circles which may have formerly existed have



been removed for the formation of the road, or to clear a site for the cottages on either side.

56. Is situated to the N.E., about seventy paces from the cairn. Its diameter is 36 feet, and it is nearly perfect, but the cromlech wants its covering flag.

57. This circle, eight paces east of the preceding, is perfect, it consists of thirty-two stones of large size. The cromlech is destroyed.

58. To the N.W. of No. 57. The circle is entirely destroyed, but the supporting stones of the cromlech remain.

59. Eight paces east of the preceding. In this instance again the circle is destroyed, only the supporting stones of the cromlech, nine in number, arranged in a circle, remain. This is the last of the monuments of which any distinct remains are to be found; there is, however, E.N.E. from No. 59, a monument which, though somewhat detached, and different in character from the principal series of remains, is evidently of coeval erection, and should be considered as belonging to the group.

60. This monument, to the east of the road leading to Sligo, is a great circular enclosure originally surrounded, as in all preceding examples, by a circle of large stones. Most of these have been removed to clear the land, and those which remain are nearly covered with earth. The enclosure is known in the district by the name of *Caltragh*, the grave-yard, from the fact that it is full of human bones; but no interment has ever been made within the enclosure in the memory of man, nor is there any tradition of a church having ever been there; it evidently dates from Pagan times; and the conclusion may, perhaps, be drawn with safety, that whilst the other monuments were the tombs of chiefs or leaders, this was the general cemetery of the soldiers or common people.

61. The first of the northern, or detached cluster of circles, is near the road leading from Rathcarrick to Sligo, in the townland of Barnasrahy. Of No. 61 there are but five stones remaining; they are six feet in height; and from the arc of the circle which they describe, it may be concluded with certainty that the circle was of unusual extent. One stone has been recently split by dynamite, not to clear the land, but apparently from sheer wantonness. Two intermediate circles, marked on the ordnance

map, but unnoticed by Petrie, have almost totally disappeared. (51\* a, 51\* b).

62. The next monument is a tumulus, composed of stones and clay, popularly known as *Cruckan-a-curragh*, the little hill of the marsh, is about 180 feet in circumference, and 15 feet in height. The summit, as is usual in sepulchral cairns, rather hollowed.

63. A few yards to the S.E. of the cairn is a circle quite perfect, but the stones are nearly covered with earth. It is 70 feet in diameter, traversed by an old ditch that conceals its proportions, and to some extent obscures a very peculiar arrangement of stones in the interior of the enclosure. The disposition of boulders is *unique* in this large series of remains. Human bones were found within the centre, and the people of the neighbourhood state that a *bronze* sword was also discovered in it many years ago.

This is the last of the monuments bearing a sepulchral character; but in the neighbourhood of the group in Barnasrahy is a remarkable boundary stone which may, perhaps, be of coeval antiquity.

64. This stone marks the mering of the three parishes of the district formerly termed Cuil-irra. It is a thin limestone-flag set on edge, 9 feet in height and breadth above ground. It is pierced by a square hole towards the east side, and from its mottled appearance, is popularly called *clock-breac*, or the speckled stone. At Minchen Hampton, in Gloucestershire, there is an ancient stone, or Menhir, called "The Long Stone." At the lower end is a perforation through which children used to be passed for a cure, or prevention of measles, whooping-cough, and other childish ailments. Similar stones in Cornwall are employed in the same way, as also in India, where such stones are common.

65. A little to the south of this boundary stone is a remarkable well, or spring, called Tobernaveen, *Tobar-na-b-flan*, the well of the warriors, perhaps in allusion to the combatants having there slacked their thirst after the battle of Carrowmore. Before concluding the description of the monuments, one sculptured grave, situated in a field near Cloverhill, deserves special notice. It is 7 feet in length by 5 feet in breadth and 4' 6" in depth. The capstones were originally flush with the earth, and

no cairn, or circle of stones, surrounded it externally, nor is there any tradition of any such ever having existed. The carvings on the stones forming the chamber, though now shallow and very indistinct, were, when first discovered, very sharply defined; they are now also half concealed by lichens and moss. The character of the sculptures is something between those of Taltin and Brugh, "which would agree very well with its date if we suppose it connected with the battle-field. This, however, is very doubtful; for there are few things that come out more prominently on investigation than the fact that all monuments which are directly or indirectly connected with battle-fields are rude and untouched by the chisel, but that all, or nearly all those which are in cemeteries, or have been erected leisurely, by or for those who occupy them, are more or less ornamented."<sup>1</sup>

It may be contended that interments discovered under these various sepulchres, cromlechs, and stone circles must necessarily be of remotest antiquity, owing to the non-discovery of iron; but iron may have been found, and yet the fact not considered worth recording; for it is only at a comparatively recent date that antiquarians have divided the duration of man on earth into the three ages of stone, bronze, and iron. The stone circles and cromlechs on the various battle-fields have not been thoroughly or scientifically explored, but bronze and flint weapons, and gold ornaments in abundance have been found. Weapons of bone or flint were certainly in use at an earlier age than bronze and iron; but it is more than probable that flint, bronze, and iron may have been in use at one and the same period, and in the same locality, down to a period long subsequent to the Christian era.<sup>2</sup> To this day the Esquimaux use bone implements, but they also employ

<sup>1</sup> Ferguson's "Rude Stone Monuments," p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> "It is a great mistake to suppose that implements of stone were abandoned directly metal was discovered. . . . it would be easy to quote numerous instances in which implements have been, without any sufficient reason, referred to the Stone Age, merely because they were formed of stone." . . . "I cannot, therefore, too strongly impress upon archæologists that many stone implements belong to the Metallic period. Why then, it will be asked, may they not all have been so?" . . . "It is an error to suppose that the rudest flint implements are necessarily the oldest."—Sir John Lubbock's *"Introduction to Nilesen's Stone Age of Scandinavia."*



iron ; and in other remote countries a stone age might be said to exist, the few iron implements in possession of the wild tribes being acquired by recent contact with western civilisation. The aborigines of the Connaught littoral were really as remote from the eastern civilisation of that age as was the New Zealander from that of Europe in the last century. Nothing could be more confirmatory of this fact than an episode in the interview which took place before the first battle of Moytirra (Cong), between Sreng, the champion of the Firbolgs, and Breas, the champion of the Tuatha de Danans. Although they addressed each other in the same language, and discovered their lineage to be the same, yet, their weapons of warfare were totally different ; for, whilst Sreng carried two heavy, thick, blunt-headed spears, Breas was armed with a pair of long, slender-pointed lances. It is not stated in the legend<sup>1</sup> of what material the heads of the Firbolg weapons were formed ; but it would seem as if the champion of the aborigines had merely a rough stake, rudely sharpened, probably hardened in the fire, whilst the invader, freshly arrived from the verge of Roman civilisation, carried slight-formed, iron-tipped shafts, similar to the light lances or assegais used still by the tribes of Southern Africa.

<sup>1</sup> As abridged by O'Curry in his published Lectures.

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## CHAPTER II.

### FIRST GLIMPSES OF SLIGO.

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“An outline is the best ;  
A lively reader's fancy does the rest.”

“Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,  
Land of the mountain and the flood.”

“How changed ! Those oaks that tower'd so high,  
Dismember'd, stript, extended lie.”

#### *Extent of Connaught.*



THE ancient Kingdom of Connaught comprised the present Counties of Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, and Galway, together with the County of Clare, now included in the Province of Munster.

Part of the County Cavan also belonged to Connaught till the sixteenth century, when it was incorporated into Ulster. Towards the close of the third century, the territory forming the present County of Clare was taken from Connaught, and added to Limerick, under the name of Thomond ; but so late as the sixteenth century, it was generally believed to form part of the Western Province ; for Sir Henry Sidney, when preparing to divide Connaught into counties, adopted the ancient boundaries.<sup>1</sup>

Connaught was Latinized Conacia ; the name of the people, Conachtaigh, was Latinized Conacii and Conachtenses, Anglicized Conacians.

#### *Tribes and Chiefs.*

The Fomorians, the Firbolgs, and the Danans effected lodgments in the province, as did also the smaller tribes of

<sup>1</sup> Dispatch to the Lords of the Council, 27th April, 1576.

Firdomnians, Damnonians, Martineans, Erneans, Attacottians, Gamanradians, Clan-Mornians, Heremonians, Hy-Briunians, Brefnians, Conmacuians, Hy-Fiachrians, and Hy-Manians.

The old "Book of Rights and Privileges,"<sup>1</sup> enlarged and continued to a much later period, though attributed to St. Beinin, who died A.D. 468, contains an account of the rights and privileges of the kings of Connaught, the revenues paid by their tributary chiefs, and the subsidies paid by the king to his subordinates when summoned to his service. The following tributes were annually to be delivered at the king's residence, situated at Croghan, in the present County of Roscommon, by the chiefs of Sligo.<sup>2</sup>

Coolavin sent 100 bullocks, 100 milch cows, 60 hogs, and 60 mantles; Leyny, 300 cows and 150 hogs every May-Day, and on each All Saints' Eve 150 mantles, together with 150 bullocks for the plough. The O'Conors, chiefs of Sligo and Roscommon, the O'Dowds, chiefs of Tireragh and Tirawley, were free from tribute; but all were bound alike to assist the King of Connaught in the event of his being called on to defend himself from the monarch of all Ireland. The chiefs, however, could not be compelled to bring their followers into the field without pay, nor to fight a battle without remuneration. If any of their men were killed, they were paid *eric*,<sup>3</sup> i.e., blood-money, for the loss sustained.

Unless the King of Connaught were of the royal line of Aodh or of Guaire, then on all public occasions the O'Connor and O'Dowd were entitled to occupy the seat of honour at his right hand. If the King of Connaught were accompanied on a campaign by the chief of Leyny or Tireragh, he was bound to pay to the former ten horses, ten robes, ten cups, and ten greyhounds, and to the latter three cups, three swords, three horses, ten rings, and ten pair of tables.

<sup>1</sup> Entitled *Leabhar-na-g-ceart*, preserved in the Books of Laccan and Ballymote.

<sup>2</sup> Names of chiefs and territories are modernised.

<sup>3</sup> *Eric* was a fine payable as compensation for murder or homicide, but it was also payable for other crimes or injuries against the person. The friends or relations of the slain might accept an *eric*, but had the option of refusing it, and seeking instead the death of the murderer.



The King of Connaught was himself liable to pay to the supreme King of Ireland a large yearly tribute, but he could not be compelled to leave his own territory in aid of his sovereign more than three times a year. On these expeditions to Tara, his subordinate chiefs were bound to accompany him, for which service the Sligo chiefs were given the following remuneration : To the chief of Tireragh and Tirawley, four ships, ten women, twenty slaves, and three cups ; to the chief of Leyny, four shields, four robes with gold borders, and four ships.

These extracts form a curious elucidation of early provincial history. In the twelfth century, when the Anglo-Normans landed in Ireland, the *Cuigeadh*, or Fifth Province, as Connaught was sometimes called, was inhabited by several tribes or families of Milesian descent. The names of these chieftains and the territories ruled over by them are recorded by one of the most learned of our antiquaries, Shane More O'Dugan, in a topographical poem still extant. The O'Conors were Kings of the Province, MacDermod was lord of Tirerrill, O'Finn and O'Carroll were lords of Calry, a territory partly in Leitrim and partly in Sligo ; O'Mulcluiche, *anglice* Stone, lord of Upper and Lower Carbury ; O'Hara, O'Huamarain, O'Cearnachan, and O'Gara, lords of Leyny ; O'Develin and O'Duncarthy, lords of Corran ; and O'Dowd, lord of Tireragh. It is curious to compare the names here given with those of the chiefs of Sligo and their territories, towards the close of the sixteenth century, when Irish tenures ceased, and the principal chiefs surrendered their lands to Elizabeth, receiving them back on English tenure.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Various Names of the Province.*

Connaught, or Conacht, as it was formerly written, is variously supposed to have derived its name from *Con*, one of the chief magicians of the Tuatha de Danans, or from “ *Con* of the Hundred Battles,” the celebrated fighting monarch of the second century, whose posterity possessed the country. The word *iacht*, or *iocht*, signifies children or posterity : hence *Con-iocht*, or the territory held by the descendants of Con.

The more ancient name of the province was Olnegmacht, so

<sup>1</sup> See under the year 1585.

called from an ancient Firbolg queen. The accurate historian, Tigernach, treating of events in A.D. 33, calls it the Fifth (*cuigeadh*) Province, that of Olnegmacht, and under that designation it is mentioned by the Four Masters so late as the year 1596: hence the inhabitants were sometimes called Fir-Olnegmacht, "strangely corrupted into Nagnata by Ptolemy," says Charles O'Connor, who evidently imagined the Greek geographer had applied the term Nagnata as the designation of the entire province, and not, as is now well-known, merely to a city.

In the Irish annals the province is frequently mentioned by other names; it is called *Coigne-Sreng*, from the famous Firbolg champion already mentioned, and *Coigne-Meadhbha*, Meave's Plain, which was long a poetical name for the Western Province over which she ruled, and some believe that this heroine furnished the original of Shakespear's "Queen Mab." Meave is looked upon as the fairies' midwife.

"O then, I see, Queen Mab hath been with you  
She is the fairies' midwife."

Meave figures prominently in the annals of the province. She was remarkable for beauty, for poetical effusions, and for courage. Her warlike deeds form subjects for many old bardic romances, and so late as A.D. 1596 the Four Masters designate Connaught as Meave's Province. Other designations, such as *Coigne Oiliol*, &c., were mere temporary or poetical appellations bestowed by the bards in honour of distinguished persons who flourished there at different epochs.

Connaught from an early period has been frequently and variously subdivided. The Firbolgs made of it three parts,<sup>1</sup> and this old ternary division was long preserved by their successors, the three Milesian tribes of Connaught, the Hy-Fiachrach, the Sil-Murray, and the Hy-Bruin. Other great divisions made of the province were *Iochtar*, or Lower Connaught, comprising the present County of Sligo, with part of Mayo, and *Uachtar*, or Upper Connaught, including the present counties of Galway and Roscommon. The distinctions of *iochtar* and *uachtar* were afterwards adopted by the Anglo-Norman De

<sup>1</sup> Ogygia, p. 175.

Burgos. The terms *Tuaisceart* and *Deisceart*, or Northern and Southern Connaught, were also applied to these two divisions, which were again subdivided into several districts possessed by the leading tribes. Many names of districts continued in use till the sixteenth century, when some were abolished, others applied to baronies, and their nomenclature thus preserved. A portion of the province was called *Iar Conacht*, or West Connaught, now Connemara, in the County of Galway. O'Flaherty was chief of this territory, which comprised the present baronies of Moycullen, Ballinahinch, and the half-barony of Ross.

There was also East Connaught, called by English writers "The Brenny," comprehending the present counties of Cavan and Leitrim, and designated respectively East Brefney, or Brefney O'Reilly, and West Brefney, or Brefney O'Rorke, from the families of O'Reilly, and O'Rorke, who ruled these territories.

#### *Nether Connaught or Sligo.*

Of all these divisions, North or Nether Connaught alone is now to be considered. It consisted of the present County of Sligo and part of Mayo.

In the second century the Greek geographer, Ptolemy, wrote a short account of Ireland, which is generally considered to be merely a corrected copy of one written by Marinus of Tyre, who lived in the first century, and who is believed to have drawn his materials from a still more ancient Tyrian account.

The description given by Ptolemy of the ancient City of Nagnata,<sup>1</sup> points to its site being either where the present town

<sup>1</sup> In Dr. Joachim Laurentio Villanuova's work, "Phœnician Ireland," it is suggested that the name Nagnata was Phœnician, and borrowed from that of the chief or leader of the body; "for in that language," says the author, "I perceive that Nagud means a prince or chieftain, to whom the people look up, and to whose decision they appeal in all matters of dispute or litigation. This word in the plural makes *Nagudin*." Relative to theories of this class, Joyce says: "In no department of Irish etymology have writers indulged to such an extent in vague and useless conjecture as in the interpretation of local names; but these interpretations are, generally speaking, false, and a large proportion of them inexpressibly silly."



of Sligo stands, or in its immediate neighbourhood. Some suppose Nagnata<sup>1</sup> to have been situated as far south as the town of Galway, on the principle laid down by Butler, that—

“Some force whole regions in despite  
O’ geography to change their site ;  
Make former times shake hands with latter,  
And that which was before come after.”

Ptolemy’s map places Nagnata to the north of Connaught, in the vicinity of Sligo Bay. The nearest town, therefore, would

<sup>1</sup> Nagnata or Magnata. “Ptolemy calls this an eminent city ; and by the situation he seems to point out some place not far from ‘Sligoe ;’ but I cannot discover the least footsteps of a city so called in all that tract of country : so all-devouring is Time ! And this instance is very apposite to that of the capital city of the Veii, the ruins <sup>(a)</sup> of which are now so far lost that geographers are not able to determine the place where it once stood, so literally is that noble prophecy of Lucan fulfilled of this and other places of Latium.

———“Gentes Mars iste futuras  
Obtuet, et Populos ævi venientis in Orbem  
Ereptos natale feret, tunc omne Latinum  
Fabula Nomen erit : Gabios, Veiosque, Coramque  
Pulvere vix tectæ poterunt monstrare Ruinæ  
Albanosque Lades, Laurentinosque Penates,  
Rus vacuum quod non habitet nisi Nocte coacta  
Invitus.”——— *Lib. 7.*

“Succeeding nations by the sword shall die,  
And swallow’d up in dark oblivion lie ;  
Almighty Latium, with her cities crown’d,  
Shall like an antiquated fable sound ;  
The Veian and the Gabian tow’rs shall fall,  
And one promiscuous ruin cover all.  
Nor after length of years a stone betray  
The place where once the very ruins lay.  
High Alba’s walls and the Lavinian Strand,  
A lonely desert and an empty land,  
Shall scarce afford for needful hours of rest  
A single house to their benighted guest.”

ADDISON.

“There are, indeed, some remains of the place in ‘Magio,’ now called ‘Mayo’ (which is mentioned in ‘Bede’), a noted village in the ad-

(a) See “Addison’s Travels.”

be Sligo. However, after a lapse of nearly 2,000 years, much of the explanation of Ptolemy's geography must depend on conjecture. On the whole, it is generally accurate, and coincides to a great extent with the accounts of the most ancient Irish historians.

These Nagnatians, or Namnetes, are generally considered to have been a colony from a district of Armoric Gaul, now represented by the French Department of the Loire-Inferieure, of which the large seaport town of Nantes is the capital, deriving its name from the Namnetes, whose chief town it was.

Armoric Gaul, or Armorica, was a name given to the maritime districts of Celtic Gaul. This tract was occupied by a confederation of tribes, in which were included the Namnetes. These various tribes possessed a large fleet, with which they carried on a considerable trade.<sup>1</sup>

This theory of the colonisation of Sligo coincides with the accounts of our oldest historians, who place the landing and settlement of the Firbolg colonies in Connaught, where they were chiefly located in Sligo and Mayo; and what more likely than that a colony of these inhabitants of Gaul, either flying from the stream of invaders continually pouring from the East, or, in pursuance of their trade, should have left their native country, and in the deepest recess of the beautiful Bay of Sligo founded the City of Nagnata, which, from its position, speedily became the market of the neighbouring county and the emporium of the West.

joining county southward. Yet, perhaps, it may be imagined by some that Ptolemy has misplaced this city a little. But I must leave that matter to the enquiry of others. Baxter judges this place to be the modern Galway, and would have it mean 'Cuan-na-Guachtie,' i.e., the Port of the Small Islands, alluding to the three islands of Arran that make a bar in the mouth of the Bay of Galway, and the little islands lying nearer to the town; and he derives the name from 'Cuan,' which signifies a port, 'na' a preposition of the genitive case, and 'Vact,' or 'Guact,' a little island, i.e., Na-guactie for Nagnata, he will have to be a small error of transcriber, instead of Naguata; and, indeed, the situation of Galway, according to Ptolemy, is pretty near the truth of the notion."—See Ware's "Ireland," by Harris, II., 42.

<sup>1</sup> Nantes is better known from the celebrated Edict thence issued by Henry IV., guaranteeing to Protestants the free exercise of their religion, and the revocation of that Edict by Louis XIV., than by its being the supposed parent of Sligo!



Picture the first infancy of Nagnata. A little village nestling under the gloomy skirts of great forests, from the centre of the conical roofs thin lines of blue wood-smoke rising perpendicularly into the air. Women either grinding corn in hand *querns*<sup>1</sup> before the door of the huts, or drawing water from the river in clumsy pots of coarse sun-dried clay. The stream that flows before the village is alive with salmon, and half-naked children are paddling in the water. In the distant glades deer browse, closer might be seen small patches of ripening grain, and in the more immediate vicinity of the huts, cattle graze in scattered groups, carefully guarded by watchers, for not far off, amidst the tangled underwood of Benbulbin, or the caves of Carns, lurk the bear, the boar, the wolf. Enter the doorway of one of these timber-built<sup>2</sup> huts, and when the eye becomes accustomed to the sharp smoke emitted by the logs of wood smouldering on the hearth in the centre of the floor, blocks of wood can be perceived placed around it, to act as chairs and tables. Wet dough is lying on heated stones to bake for the supper of the absent hunter, who, when he returns wearied from his exertions, will have bread to add to the spoils of the chase. The wattled sides and rafters of the hut are black with smoke; against the wall lean the weapons of the occupant; in a corner a spare bow, a bundle of flint-headed arrows, a net, fishing-lines with hooks fashioned of bone, a pile of skins representing the bedding of the family, are all huddled together. A slight eminence overlooking the hamlet is crowned by the Dun, or fort of the chief, and peeping above the pallisades appear the pointed roofs of his residence.<sup>3</sup> Such may be pictured the first settlement of the Namnetes.

<sup>1</sup> The *quern* was a hand-mill composed of two stones, the upper one round and revolving in the cup-shaped hollow of the lower or larger stone, as a ball revolves in its socket. A couple of wooden handles, inserted in and projecting from the upper stone, served to work the mill.

<sup>2</sup> If men settle in a wooded region, they naturally employ timber in the erection of their dwellings. When timber becomes scarce, clay and stone will be called into requisition.

<sup>3</sup> The dress of these primitive inhabitants is more difficult to determine and describe than their habitations. Fortunately, there are "two instances recorded of human remains found in the bogs of Ireland. One of these, the mummy of which is now in the Royal Dublin Society House,



There must always be sufficient pre-existing reasons to induce population to settle in one spot rather than in another. In the present day, and especially in new colonies, the causes which have determined the site of a town are still apparent; but in ancient times those causes are difficult, if not impossible, to discover, because habits of life and circumstances altogether have since so widely changed. It may be surmised that the Namnetes were decided in their choice of locality by the facilities to commence afforded by the sheltered Bay of Sligo, and its apparent remoteness from risk of aggressive disturbance. Ptolemy calls Nagnata "episemos polis," a noble city; some writers have placed it at Drumcliff, once a town of more importance than Sligo; others have named Mayo, now a very insignificant hamlet in the county to which it gives its name, but formerly of note; other localities<sup>1</sup> have also been assigned to Nagnata, but the

was discovered in a bog, nine or ten feet beneath the surface. When first exhumed, the body was perfectly fresh, and enclosed in a dress not unlike that in the description given of Gurth in 'Ivanhoe,' consisting of a tunic of cow-hide, apparently tanned, but with some remains of hair still preserved on the side worn next the skin. The dress is joined in the most accurate and beautiful manner, exhibiting an extraordinary perfection in the art of sewing. The hair on the head, which is both long and fine, is of a dark-brown colour, and the skull is compressed in a remarkable manner, owing to a portion of the earthy matter having been removed by the acid of the bog. The body of a man was found under precisely similar circumstances by Mr. R. C. Walker, but it is evidently of more recent date—perhaps not older than the time of Elizabeth; for the dress, which is of woollen texture, and still quite perfect, is precisely that represented in Walker's 'Irish Bards.'"—*Wilde's Boyne and Blackwater*, p. 237.

<sup>1</sup> Wright, in his History of Ireland (page 3), places Nagnata almost as much to the north of Sligo as Galway is to the south. His words are as follows—"Proceeding along the western coast, from the northern cape, Ptolemy mentions first, the mouth of the river Ravius, supposed to be the modern Guibarra. A considerable town (πόλις ἐπιστημος), at which he next arrives, and which he calls Magnata, appears to answer to the site of Donegal. Then follow in succession five rivers, the Libnius (or, according to one editor, Libeius), answering probably to Sligo Bay. . . . The tribes enumerated by Ptolemy as inhabiting this line of coast are the Erdini, or Erpeditani, whose territory adjoined that of the Venicnii; the Magnatæ, who occupied the neighbourhood of Donegal, the site of their chief town, which took its ancient name from them; the Auteri, who held the district, extending from the County of Donegal to that of Sligo; the Gangani, who inhabited the County of Mayo. . . ."

preponderance of evidence as to site is in favour of the town of Sligo.

In these early and terrible days, the devastation or destruction of a city was a congenial occupation to wandering or hostile tribes. Irish cities were in reality merely an aggregate of wooden huts, erected without method in a rambling desultory manner. It may therefore be readily imagined that scarcely had the city been wrapped in the fiery embrace of the flames, the dense clouds of smoke cleared from its blackened site, and its glowing ruins cooled, than moss and grasses began to carpet its streets, once "worn by the feet that now were silent," mantled the slight mounds that marked the former homes of the slaughtered inhabitants; in a few short years the name of the ancient city of Nagnata would be forgotten, and the hamlet that afterwards occupied its site was called Sligo.

The importance of towns rises and falls with their surrounding circumstances. Though Sligo was not a place of great note at the time of the Anglo-Norman Invasion, still, in the Danish epoch, it appears to have been a considerable trading port. Under the Ostmanni rule it rose to importance, for the Danes, when driven out of the champaign country, betook themselves to the towns along the littoral, and developed into good citizens and thriving traders. Sligo was one of the ports in which they secured themselves, and from whence they "carried on a considerable commerce abroad, as well as an inland traffic with the natives at home."<sup>1</sup> By Danes is not meant merely the people that came from the country now known as Denmark, but also the kindred tribes inhabiting Scandinavia, Livonia, Courland, and the vast tract which borders the Baltic sea. Lady Morgan, in her "Patriotic Sketches," does not assign prehistoric antiquity to the founding of Sligo, but says that the inhabitants of Ballysodare, having been driven from their native place by civil commotions, fled to the shore of the neighbouring bay, and of the "shells and pebbles" flung up by the action of the tide along the coast, erected a number of huts, which formed the infancy of Sligo. This theory may be dismissed on its own internal

<sup>1</sup> Molyneux on "Danish Mounts." Dublin, 1725; p 191.

evidence, as shells and pebbles are not suitable building materials.

### *Derivation.*

Many fanciful derivations have been given to the name of Sligo. Some affirm that ancient writers called it *Sliocht-gae*, or the race or progeny settled beside the sea, from which combination of words descends the modern name by which the town is known.<sup>1</sup> In the Four Masters, the appellation of Sligo is apparently derived from *Sligeach*, signifying Shelly river, from *slig*, a shell. Although such is not now a characteristic of the river, yet, shortly previous to 1836, on sinking foundations for the erection of houses, a quantity of white shells was discovered in various localities within the area now occupied by the town; and in 1881 a similar result followed excavations for the reception of pipes for an intercepting sewer along the river bank within the town.

The occupants of a range of cottages, situated not far from the Sligo strand, employ themselves during the summer season in gathering cockles and mussels. The shells are thrown out in a heap near the cottages; the white mass thus formed is remarkable, and would accumulate to an immense pile were the shells not removed for spreading on walks instead of gravel, or for adding to compost heaps, when becoming disintegrated, the shells act as lime in fertilising the soil. Now, if we suppose the ancient inhabitants of Sligo, with whom fish formed a staple article of diet, untrammelled by police regulations forbidding refuse to be thrown out in front of their dwellings, it is certain that in the course of a very few years the accumulation of shells would form a deposit, such as is often found in digging deeply on the site of the ancient town, and the white, glittering heaps seen from a distance may not improbably have given rise to the distinctive appellation of Sligo, *i.e.*, *shelly*.

Whether the bed of the stream be shelly or not, the ancient name of the river was certainly spelt *Sligeach*; it appears in the Four Masters, also in the "Life of St. Patrick," by Tirechan: "And he said, behold the sea will remove in from this place in the latter times, and you shall go out to the river of Sligo

<sup>1</sup> "Phœnician Ireland," p. 200.



(flumen Sligichæ) to the wood ;”<sup>1</sup> and an ancient Irish poem enumerates the “flumina prisca decem” of O’Flaherty—

“ In days of old these ancient rivers ten,  
Whose banks their flowing waters scarce could pen :  
The Lee, the Bush, the Bann, and the Barrow,  
The *Sligeach*, the Mourne, the Moy, the Samer,<sup>2</sup>  
The Finn, the Liffey, which in Leinster flows,  
Are the sole streams that ancient history knows.”<sup>3</sup>

The river is variously designated the *Sligeach*, *Sligigh*, or the *Slichney* of *Cambrensis*, the *Libnius*, or *Liboeus*, of other authors, and now commonly called the *Garvogue* (*Garbhog*), or *Sligo* river; in the seventeenth century it was styled the *Gitly*, evidently a corruption of *Gilly*, a name given to it from the fact of its flowing from *Lough Gill*; its course westward into the Atlantic, through its marsh-bordered channel, then a mixture of bog, water, and aqueous vegetation.

Both the county and town of *Sligo* thus derive their appellation from the river. There is a tradition that the original town stood on a plain, now overspread by the waters of *Lough Gill*, and that the islets now studding the bosom of the lake are but the crests of verdant knolls which formerly adorned its green expanse. As proof, the remains of houses or buildings are said to be visible at the bottom of the lake on a sunshiny day.<sup>4</sup> This belief in a submerged city probably originated in frequently-recurring optical illusions, produced by shadows from the overhanging mountains, or clouds fantastically reflected upon the unruffled surface of the waters, presenting to the eye of the

<sup>1</sup> Demonstrating also that in the days of St. Patrick woods still extended to the outskirts of the town.

<sup>2</sup> The ancient name of the river *Erne*.

<sup>3</sup> “Laoui, Buas, Banna, Bearbha, Buan,  
Saimer, *Sligeach*, Modharn, Muaidh,  
Fionn, Lifea, Laighnibh go gle,  
Is iad sin na sean aibhne.”

—MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.

<sup>4</sup> “A Saxon tourist asked a river-side boatman, who had rowed him from the town to the lake, if he had ever seen ‘the round towers of other days,’ or the buildings of past ages gleaming under the waters. ‘In troth I have,’ was the ready answer, ‘and shure, on a still summer’s day, won’t you see the smoke from the chimneys rising straight up in the air, from the surface of the lake.’”

beholder the fantastic resemblance of buildings of past ages shimmering beneath the seemingly transparent medium.

This fanciful idea is not by any means confined to Lough Gill. Almost every considerable lake in the kingdom possesses its own legend of an enchanted well which, by fatal neglect of some fairy injunction, or on account of an affront offered to its guardian spirit, suddenly overflowed the valley, and overwhelmed the inhabitants, with their cattle and houses, in one common ruin.<sup>1</sup>

Within the town of Sligo<sup>2</sup> is the celebrated well of *Tober-nashelmida*, or Snail's Well. Its name is derived from an enchanted, or metamorphosed being, supposed to be seen every seventh year emerging from its waters in the form of a huge snail, and who possesses the power of effecting at some future period, which, it is to be hoped, may always remain in futurity, an overflowing of the well, and a second submergence of the metropolis of the west.<sup>3</sup> The days are gone by when—

“ Tales pleased the hamlet, and news cheered the Hall,  
And the tune of old times was still welcome to all.”

Unfortunately, many interesting legends are now buried in oblivion, which, if recorded, would have proved invaluable as illustrating the ancient ideas, culture, and speculative opinions of the people.

Lake eruptions are recorded in the most ancient Irish Annals. One is reputed to have occurred in A.M. 3727. The early settlers cleared off all timber from the plains of Moylurg, in Roscommon. A lake then arose, covering with its waters a part of the plain. Such is the account given of the origin of Lough Skean, which is situated partly in the County of Roscommon, and partly in the parish of Kilmastranny, County of Sligo. It washes the southern border of the townland of Creevagh, or *the forested land*. Lough Skean signifies *the lake of the wings*, a name given to it seemingly, as to Lough Skean, near the Tay, in Scotland, by reason of its shape somewhat resembling a kite on the wing.

In comparatively recent times a lake eruption is mentioned, A.D. 1490, in the County of Sligo, of which a vivid tradition still prevails in the district in which it occurred.

<sup>1</sup> Joyce's "Irish Names of Places," p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> In the townland of Knocknagany.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.



Giraldus Cambrensis, writing in the twelfth century, described the tradition of the eruption in the North of Ireland of the waters that overwhelmed the plains now occupied by Lough Neagh, and his statement has been immortalised by Moore, who thus alludes to the subject:—

“ On Lough Neagh’s banks, as the fisherman strays  
 When the calm clear eve’s declining,  
 He sees the round towers of other days  
 In the waves beneath him shining.”

It is to be feared readers may be so incredulous as to doubt the reliability of the following account, as preserved in the *Dinnsenchus*, of the destruction of the ancient town of Sligo, and the overwhelming of its encircling and fertile plain, by the waters that now form Lough Gill.

In former times two chiefs, Romra and Omra, lived on the plain now occupied by the waters of Lough Gill. Romra had a daughter, who, from the clear brightness of her skin, obtained the name of Gill. Omra asked her in marriage, but she rejected him. Shortly afterwards she proceeded to lave her fair skin in a well on the plain. After having disrobed, she beheld in the limpid water the reflection of her rejected wooer standing above. She died of shame (modest creature), and her nurse, on discovering Gill’s body lying lifeless in the well, poured out such a flood of tears that they formed a lake, which thus derived its title from Gill, the daughter of Romra. In revenge for the death of his daughter, Romra killed Omra, and he himself died of grief. The two cairns, Cairn Romra and Cairn Omra, mark their graves. So runs the legend.

The names of these two chiefs are not preserved in local tradition, but two cairns give name to a townland, *na-Carna*, now Carns, one of which—large and of a peculiar oval saucer-like shape—is situated at a considerable elevation, and commands a comprehensive view of Lough Gill, the surrounding country, and the magnificent panorama of encircling mountains.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “ To the right may be seen the sunlight gleaming from the white rocks that stretch from Collooney to Doonee ; thence along the south shore of the lake, bare white rocks, with heath in patches of more or less extent ;



The Pagan Irish particularly fancied elevated sites for their final resting-place; numerous hills and elevations are crowned with these relics of the past, under which some distinguished chief of his day reposes, to be roused only by the last trump, his name and state alike forgotten long ages past. Of the foregoing legend little is preserved in local tradition, save that where now lies the lake extended previously a plain.

But geology is a merciless uprooter of ancient fableland, an uncompromising enemy to legends and old-world lore; it laughs such tales to scorn, informs us that lake districts in Ireland are chiefly situated on tracts occupied by the carboniferous limestone formation. Geology will not listen for a single instant to the legend of the death of the fair Gill, but dogmatically acquaints us that the lake lies in a true rock basin in a limestone district, and, like many others similarly placed, is due to chemical solution preceded by glacial erosion.

Is it not more interesting to see in fancy the fair Gill lying dead in the well, the waters gradually rising to shroud her lovely form, than to view the fall or hear the loud resounding crash of the avalanche from the heights of Slish?—to behold the Garvogue and lake-bed enveloped in their icy shroud, where—

“The slow glacier down the mountain flank  
Creeps with an unseen motion through the ages.”

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lower down, oak and birch coppices. The spectator, turning round, may observe the same range of hills crossing the river at Collooney, rising higher at Knocknacree, and passing out of sight towards Ballina, always showing the same rounded tops, white rocks, and brown heather. The spectator, turning round still with the course of the sun, may glance over the low undulating coast of Tireragh, till Knocknarea is reached, and then will be observable a difference in the appearance of this hill, which shows green to the summit; instead of rounded white rocks, are seen long terrace-like lines of grey stone. Towards the north, across the sea, Rosses-point comes into view, and then the eye reaches Benbulbin. What a contrast to Rockwood! Here is seen a mountain, flat-topped, cut off as with a knife, its sharp perpendicular termination standing like a wall facing the sea; terraces of grey rock, perpendicular cliffs, deep gorges, and again cliffs on the other side; Cope's Mountain, with its jagged cliffs, resembling walls and towers; a range of low hills, of which one with a very flat top, known as O'Rorke's Table, is remarkable; innumerable little grey cliffs along the Enniskillen line of road, till Benbo closes the scene.”—*Lecture on the Geology of Sligo, by Colonel folliott.*

Or, in Coleridge's beautiful words:—

“ Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,  
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!  
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!”

The dimmed sunlight resting but for brief instants on the chill surface of the snow, flying gleams of light piercing at intervals through rents in the fantastic cloud-vault, the grey shadowy atmosphere personifying frozen death enthroned triumphant on the pallid frost-bound earth. No! science, its geology and its glaciers, must be discarded, and the legend of the fair Gill must not be gainsayed.

Another and even more interesting legend relative to Lough Gill, ascribes the origin of its name to a different personage. Manahan is looked upon as the Irish Neptune, or ruler of the waters—lakes as well as giant ocean—and his spirit is supposed to ride at intervals on the storm. Manahan, a chief of the Tuatha de Danans, and son of Allot, one of their most famous champions, fell in battle, fighting against the Milesians. After death he was “canonized” as a sea-sprite, being surnamed MacLir, *i.e.*, “Son of the Ocean.” By his study of the heavens he was able during life to predict all changes from fair to foul weather; therefore, after his departure to Tirnanog, the elysium of the ancient Irish, the disposal of good or bad atmospheric influences was his presumed attribute. Manahan (who must have shared in the national propensity for large families) had nine daughters. These nine sisters bequeathed their names, according to local tradition, to nine lakes; but of these in the neighbourhood of Sligo only three are remembered by the peasantry—Gill, Ern, and Cé, or Key.

Gill, from whom Lough Gill takes its name, is said to be seen very often in the vicinity of the lake, over the waters of which she skims in her fleet-rolling chariot. The White Shee, or Fairy Queen, has a well-recognised pre-eminence over others of her sex and race, and it was probably owing to his familiarity with a tradition of this kind that Spencer drew materials for his “Faerie Queen.” Amongst the country-people it is also remembered that “long, long ago,” a man living near Sligo, much addicted to card-playing and gambling, whenever he found himself reduced to extremities, used to call for a winning card

in the name of Gill, and always obtained the card named (it was before the invention of slipping a king). This inveterate gambler, one evening, passing by the lake after supper, encountered a beautiful young lady, who warned him that if ever again he called for a card in the name of Gill-ni-Manahan, he would rue it. For a long time he discontinued the practice, finding, it is to be presumed, that honesty was the best policy. Again, however, driven to extremity, he called for a card in the name of his fair friend, and obtained his request; but shortly afterwards, when riding near the shore of the lake, he was thrown from his horse and had his leg broken. This accident was looked upon as a punishment for the violated mandate of the justly-offended sprite, and *of course* proves the existence of the fair Gill beyond a doubt.<sup>1</sup>

#### FAIRY QUEEN OF LOUGH GILL.

I saw Lough Gill on a summer day—  
 Oh, how serenely fair!—  
 When flash'd on her brow the noontide ray,  
 And Heaven was reflected there.  
 How clear that silver mirror shone,  
 While many a gliding bark thereon  
 Spread wide at morn her snowy sail,  
 Or wooed at eve the freshening gale,  
 Where many "an isle of beauty" lay  
 Yclad in verdant full array;  
 And o'er those waves from time unknown  
 Th' enchantress fair  
 Whose name they bear  
 Hath reign'd on her crystal throne;  
 There her fleet chariot-wheels of old  
 Over the glassy waters roll'd,  
 And legends say the royal maid  
 In robe of purest white array'd,  
 And crown'd with diadem of gold,  
 Still reins abreast three coal-black steeds,  
 Still on her car of triumph speeds,  
 In royal pride and radiant sheen  
 Around her native valleys green,  
 And skims o'er the blue tide's surface cold.

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<sup>1</sup> MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.



Oh, Lady born of fairy land,  
 Brighter than earth's bright daughters,  
 For evermore with magic wand  
 Rule o'er thy realm of waters !  
 The lake with islets gemm'd, and o'er  
 The wooded banks, the leafy shore—  
 Fit empire for a Fairy Queen.  
 Did ever morning's dewy eye,  
 Or the midnight moon from her throne on high,  
 Look down on so fair a scene ?  
 And if there be a spell or charm  
 To shed thereon and shield from harm,  
 O'er yonder lake's unruffled crest,  
 Nor cloud nor shadow may we trace ;  
 Still peace within her tranquil breast,  
 Still heaven reflected on her face.<sup>1</sup>

Lough Labe, in the parish of Toomour, between the baronies of Corran and Tirerrill, is said to be named after another of Manahan's daughters ; and in the same neighbourhood, Lough Arrow is reputed to have derived its name from another sister, Caravac, anglicised Arrow. Cé, one also of Manahan's daughters, rendered unsightly by magic spell, fled to the borders of a lake in Roscommon, which still bears her name. She took up her abode near Rockingham, and resided with a family called Keelty, to whom for their kindness she granted the privilege of immunity from death by drowning. By the laws of her enchantment she could no longer remain in any locality where her hideousness had been remarked. When this occurred, she returned to Kesh, in Corran, her native place. Here everybody refused to shelter her, save Oisin, who compassionated and received her in his house. This broke the spell, and the following morning she appeared as a beautiful woman.<sup>2</sup>

Another and older account represents the name of the lake as derived from a man named Cé, one of the chief druids of Nuada, King of the Tuatha de Danans. This account is contained in the copy of the curious legendary tract, entitled "Dinnsenchus,"

<sup>1</sup> Specially composed for this work by M. S. G.

<sup>2</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.* Bran, one of Finn Mac Cumhail's celebrated hounds, employed by him in chasing the boar from Collooney to Benbulbin, was, it is said, also one of the sisters thus transformed by magic.

preserved in the book of Laccan, and is of peculiar interest to the historian and antiquary, inasmuch as it indicates a different locality as the site of the battle of Moytirra Cong, from that which has hitherto been generally recognised as the scene of the overthrow of the Firbolgs by the Tuatha de Danans.

The MS. from which the following legend is taken was compiled in the year 1416, in the present County of Sligo, by Gilla Isa Mor MacFirbis, one of the most eminent antiquarians of his time. Whether his authority for the legend were written or oral, MacFirbis considered the first overthrow of the Firbolgs to have occurred to the north-west of Lough Key, because the druid, Cé, from whom the name of the lake has been derived in the legend, is represented to have fled from the battle-field in a south-eastern direction; and that account points to the site of the contest as being the same now marked by the extensive sepulchral remains in the townland of Moytirra, parish of Kilmacrannny, about ten miles to the north-west of Lough Key.<sup>1</sup>

#### LEGEND OF LOUGH KEY.

“YE green unruffled waves, ye pure glad waters,  
Whence rose ye? Wherefore flow'd ye o'er the plain  
When he who fled Moytirra's field of slaughters  
Ignoble safety sought, but sought in vain?

“When flash'd the steel, when arrows flew around him,  
Half-frantic, panic-struck, he fled the foe;  
A brave man would have fought till victory crown'd him,  
Or fallen where many a gallant heart lay low.

“But King Nuada's Druid fled from glory,  
Pursued and wounded on that fearful day;  
Behind him raged the battle fierce and gory,  
Before, the velvet lawn of verdure lay.

“There, and 'mid that plain, exhausted, almost dying,  
On the rude cairn, he laid his weary breast,  
There slumber'd, all 'unwept, unhonour'd,' lying,  
To wake no more from that inglorious rest.

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<sup>1</sup> William M. Hennessy's Preface to the “Annals of Loch Cé.”



“ For silent, slow as dawns the light of heaven,  
Through the green sward the magic waters rose,  
Unseen, unheard, as falls the dews of even,  
Around and o’er the recreant’s head they close.

“ No daring deeds, on marble tablet graven,  
To future ages shall record his fame ;  
But men will ever scorn the dastard craven,  
While Key’s avenging waters bear his name.<sup>1</sup>

The tradition of cities buried beneath the waters is not confined to the lakes of Ireland. There is also the beautiful fable of a buried City of Gold in the Atlantic, sometimes seen, but ever with fatal results to the observer ; its situation is supposed to be somewhere off the coast of Connaught, the exact locality not defined. Why, therefore, not stoutly claim it as originally belonging to Sligo, and defy cavillers to prove the contrary !

“ Years onward have swept,  
Aye ! long ages have roll’d,  
Since the billows first slept  
O’er the City of Gold.

“ Neath its eddy of white,  
Where the green wave is swelling,  
In their halls of delight  
Are the fairy tribes dwelling.

“ Yet at times the waves sever,  
And then you may view  
The yellow walls ever  
’Neath the ocean’s deep blue.”

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<sup>1</sup> A free translation of the Irish poem in the “Dinnsenchus,” commencing “Loch Cé cro map mebar,” written for this work by M. S. G. With it arrived the following letter :—

“ I send from my shaded bower  
The wished-for lines to thee,  
To wile the passing hour,  
And wake kind thoughts of me.  
But should they fail to charm,  
And jar upon your ear,  
Still, I have done no harm,  
You know—the fire is near.

M. S. G.”



As mirages in the fiery Sahara delude the eye of the exhausted traveller with visions of water, giving hopes of slaking his unsupportable thirst, so the vapoury exhalations around the Irish Western coasts might delude the eye of a storm-tossed mariner with visions of glittering spires, a tranquil anchorage at foot of verdant slopes; but these appearances all vanish when the sailor fancies himself entering his long-sought haven of rest. Optical illusions are not so very infrequent as is generally supposed. It will suffice to quote two instances, one of comparatively recent, the other of more remote date. In a description of West Connaught, written by O'Flaherty in 1684, he mentions the appearance, in 1161, of "fantastical ships" in the harbour of Galway, sailing against the wind; and Hardiman, editor of the above work, remembered to have seen a well-defined aerial phenomenon of the kind from a small hill near Croagh Patrick, in Mayo, on a serene evening in the autumn of 1798. Hundreds who also witnessed the scene looked upon it as supernatural; but soon afterwards it was ascertained that the illusion had been produced by the fleet of Admiral Warren, then in pursuit of a French squadron off the west coast of Ireland. In like manner, may not the optical illusion of 1161, seen in the harbour of Galway, have been produced by a distant fleet of galleys. Just as the Tuatha de Danans were supposed, as already stated, to have taken up their abode under the green hills of the country, after their subjection by the Milesians, so previously the Firbolgs, on their final overthrow by the Tuatha de Danans, were said to have retired under the waters of the lakes and of the ocean, the fable probably taking its rise from the fact of their having retired for security to the crannoges on the lakes, and to the islands off the western coast.

#### A.M. 3790.

In A.M. 3790,<sup>1</sup> an irruption of the ocean is recorded. The Atlantic burst over the low-lying sand-hills, that up to then had

<sup>1</sup> Although little reliance can be placed on the dates of events prior to the introduction of Christianity, yet, it is probable the events recorded in many instances really took place, though at a much later epoch than stated. This and all subsequent dates are, however, given as entered by the Four Masters, without any attempt at revising their chronology.

restrained its fury, It overflowed a large portion of territory now covered by the waters of Drumcliff Bay. The scene of this catastrophe was the district lying between Finned in the ancient Magherow, and Ross-Ceide.<sup>1</sup> This latter designation then included not merely the peninsula as now washed on the one side by the bay of Sligo, and on the other, by that of Drumcliffe, but also the portion of land in the latter inlet, which was covered by the ocean irruption. The name is yet retained in the designation "the Rosses," applied to two townlands at the extremity of this peninsula.<sup>2</sup>

On a midsummer's day, place yourself on the summit of the undulating and bent-clothed hills south of the scene of this catastrophe. On the one side is seen the busy watering-place of the Rosses, thronged with strangers, who come from afar to enjoy the healthful sea breezes. On the other side extends the submerged district, at low water uncovered by the Atlantic ; then

<sup>1</sup> From *ross*, a peninsula, and *ceide* (pro. Keady), a hill. *Ross*, when topographically applied, has two distinct meanings—(i.), a point of land extending into the sea ; (ii.), a wood. Its diminutive form *rosan* is still used in the spoken Irish language, to denote a shrubbery or thick wood.

<sup>2</sup> Upper and Lower Rosses, in Irish *na rossa iochtach*, and *na rossa uachtach*. A recent discovery somewhat confirms the record of this catastrophe. The Rev. James Graves, M.R.I.A., during a visit to Sligo in 1880, was informed of the recent exposure of a skeleton, through the falling of a clay cliff in the vicinity of Drumcliff, about half a mile from the village, on the northern shore of the inlet. When first discovered, the skeleton was decorated with a bead necklace, which was removed by the country-people ; but, as far as could be ascertained, the beads appear to have been formed of baked clay, described as "marbles," such as children play with. The skeleton was covered by nearly 12 feet of stratified and undisturbed earth, was not extended at full length, and bore the appearance of having been deposited rather than interred, the strata being intact. The length of the skeleton indicated a height of 5 feet 2 or 3 inches ; the remains, that of an old woman, were considered by E. T. Hardman, to be of the Prehistoric Age, and it is easy to imagine that, overtaken by the tide, or overwhelmed by the great irruption of the sea in that locality, the old woman was drowned, sank into the soft mud, and was silted over. The constrained and awkward attitude in which the skeleton was discovered seems to favour this idea ; the lower limbs were twisted into a position quite unusual in any form of prehistoric burial.—*Paper read before the R.I.A., May, 1881, by E. T. Hardman, G.S.I.*

gradually that truth dawns on the mind which our Laureate has so beautifully expressed—

“ There rolls the deep where grew the tree,  
O Earth, what changes thou hast seen ?  
There where the long street roars, hath been  
The silence of the central sea.”

And why, in some degree at least, might not the district present to the eye once more its verdant plain ? If, in Ireland, as much capital and energy were expended in taking in land, flooded by sea, lake, and river, as the Dutch have devoted to a like purpose, the area available for agricultural purposes would be greatly increased. A good example of what can be accomplished in this way is afforded by the dyke erected in 1858 to shut out the tide from Trawholly strand. The Dutch, who are the greatest practical authorities on this description of engineering, do not attempt to resist the invasion of the ocean by construction of massive sea-walls ; on the contrary, their embankments consist of a series of slopes, so as to break the force of the waves. The nature of the material employed is of no importance, provided the face of the slopes be sufficiently solid to bear the shock of the waters, whilst a strand is being washed up, to accumulate against it, by tidal currents.

#### *Prehistoric appearance of the County.*

The scenery of the County of Sligo is universally acknowledged to be amongst the most attractive in Ireland ; and if a choice were to be made as to which portion of it is entitled to be considered the most charming, undoubtedly that rank would be accorded to the country about Lough Gill. Even to those who have wandered through Europe, and seen its finest scenery, there still remains something inexpressibly graceful and quietly picturesque in the scenery surrounding the lake.

Beautiful, indeed, must have been the sylvan scenery around Lough Gill in primeval days, when the slanting rays of the setting sun shone on the variegated tints of the autumnal foliage, and the sombre pines of the dense forests ; the desolate appearance of the landscape might chance to be enlivened by the solitary cot of a Firbolg seen in pursuit of fish ; the eagle on



outspread wing watching his quarry beneath, or the distant howl of the wolf might fall upon the ear from the verge of the neighbouring thickets. Not a wave, not a ripple, on the surface of the waters, and the sun playing strange freaks of mirage on its bosom. After a long, warm day, deer and wild cattle stand knee-deep in the water to cool themselves, whilst one herd lows across to another from their watery resting-place. The trout and salmon are rising with eddying splash; the swift and swallow dart after their insect food with skilful swoop; and birds of prey wing their way homeward to the mountain cliffs. The sun now begins to sink; masses of purple light, edged with flame, float in an ocean of duller purple; in the west all is aglow. As the shades of night deepen, the red glare of the hunter's solitary fire illumines the rocks and tree-stems around, and is reflected in the waters below—

“ A starlit vapour shimmers through the pines ;  
It steals along the sides from height to height ;  
Reveals the waken'd ‘forest’s’ broken lines ;  
Bathes the whole mountain in a flood of light,  
Which, wrapt around in its own purity,  
Knows not of hate, or sin, or misery.”

This is a typical picture of the country, as it might be imagined about two thousand years ago; a landscape such as may now be seen in many districts of the Dominion of Canada.

To the aborigine the lake must have been a region abounding in legends and objects of superstitious awe. Within the area of the islets what snug little nooks for modern picnics; but upon these the aborigine dared not venture, for they were, in his imagination, the chosen home of evil spirits. Offerings, to appease their anger, were made upon crags and promontories. Every creek of the lake's shore must have had its special spirit. The gentle evening breeze sighing through the tall reeds and rushes, may have been deemed the whispering of these dreaded beings, and numerous were the spots to which the native bowed down in reverence as his cot drifted past the lonely shore.

An interesting legend, concerning the little island of *Inishfree*,

or the heathery island,<sup>1</sup> is related as having occurred in these primitive times.

On the islet, though small in size, grew the most luscious of fruit, which was, however, exclusively reserved for the use of the deities, who had placed a great monster or dragon as guard on their orchard. The daughter of the chief of the district required her lover, a young warrior named Free, to procure for her some of the forbidden fruit as a proof of his affection and valour. Free landed on the isle, succeeded in slaying the monster placed to guard the trees; but on regaining the frail canoe in which he had obtained access to the island, weak and exhausted by his exertions, and feeling need of refreshment, he tasted some of the stolen fruit.

The effect on mortal constitution was fatal. He had but just strength to row to the shore, when he fell dying at the feet of his mistress. He exerted his remaining powers sufficiently to acquaint her with the cause of his fate, and the damsel, filled with remorse, immediately herself ate of the stolen fruit, and fell dead across his corpse. The two lovers were buried in the island which had proved so fatal to them.

In days of old, the various septs in Ireland lived each in their own little district or territory, surrounded by a wild belt of forest marsh or heath, cut off from other similar districts by this kind of intervening neutral ground. Each sept might be looked upon as independent, having its own chief, its own land, its own village, and its own slaves.

The reader may, in fancy, accompany one of these ancient inhabitants of Sligo, as with bow and arrows, and skein at side, he starts at sunrise to visit one of his kindred living at Boyle. More early risers than at present, dawn sees the whole village astir, when with his large wolf dogs at heel he quits the hamlet; for a short distance he passes through cultivated land, but soon plunges into the gloom of the forest. On reaching the

<sup>1</sup> Strange as it may appear, this diminutive islet, which contains only half-an-acre, is mentioned in history. The Four Masters state that in A.D. 1244, Conor Mac Tiernan murdered a brother chief, named Fergal Maccadane, on *Inisfraeich*, now anglicised Inishfree. At that date it was probably an island fortress.



picturesque little gorge in the Slieve Dæane Mountains,<sup>1</sup> a fine deer starts across the path ; in a second the arrow is fitted to the string, the shaft whistles through the air and buries itself behind the stag's shoulder, but the deer is strong, and travels fast, yet with failing strength ; higher and higher the hunter follows with eager dogs, till on the summit of the mountain the fleet hounds pull down their prey. Breathless, but triumphant, the hunter looks around. What a view meets his eye ! Beneath lies his native village ; northward, the heights of Ben-Bulbin, clothed with trees, its woods extending down to the sea, whilst over the tree-tops peeps the green expanse of the plain of Magherow. Southward lie the Tireragh Mountains, those tremendous upheavals of the earth's crust, those strange mighty walls and barriers interposing between Tireragh and Leyny, covered with woods, extending into the dim distance ; regions of peaceful solitude with their far up tarns, their little lakes, birthplace of the torrent stream and river ; toward the sea, the country bare and open—Leyny, Corran, and Coolavin, apparently alternations of woodland and pasturage, but everywhere trees predominate. His spoil secured from the prowling wolf, the hunter continues his solitary journey, winding about to avoid swamps and dense underwood. Here and there, on the summit of a hill, he sees the residence of a chief, enlivened by the play of sunlight on the surrounding cornfields yellow to harvest ; but the heavy nature of the ground now causes him to feel weary, and just then, emerging from a small wood which crowned a knoll, he sees the residence<sup>2</sup> of a friend on the verge of Lough Annaminvrach, an

<sup>1</sup> In the townland of *Carrownamaddo*, or the quarter-land of the dogs. It is often mentioned in the Annals. It was also, in 1689, the scene of a sharp skirmish between the Enniskilleners and Sarsfield.

<sup>2</sup> Now Ballyhealy, *alias* Hollybrook. In this rath, in which the traveller is supposed to have rested, rabbits having established themselves, Colonel folliott's game-keeper, in 1880, proceeded to dig them out, when the earth gave way under his vigorous strokes, and he found himself, like the discoverer of buried Pompeii, deposited in the interior of the earth. The part of the rath in which he found himself was apparently the ancient storehouse of an Irish Chief. It is about six feet in width. From it diverges a passage, circular in form, the sides composed of rubble masonry. The actual height of this receptacle and passage could not be ascertained from the accumulation of fallen earth.



inlet of Lough Arrow. Here he is received with the hospitality of the age, and towards evening resumes his journey. To his right, perched on a spur of Carricknahorner West, he sees a favourite resort of Druids, as denoted by misletoe growing on the surrounding trees, and the close vicinity of a cool, clear rivulet murmuring at its base.<sup>1</sup> The traveller soon ascends through lofty pines and majestic oak to the summit of the Curlews, a locality even then celebrated as the battle-field of invaders and invaded. From the summit, looking towards Brefney, nothing appears save wood and forest; but Boyle is in sight, and the traveller, as the evening falls, reaches in safety his destination.

What changes have not these scenes witnessed since remote times! what successions of inhabitants before emerging from barbarism. Each successive wave of invaders

“ Endured their destined period and fulfilled  
Their purposed end, then at the appointed hour  
Fell into ruin.”

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<sup>1</sup> It is still recounted by the country-people that, in pre-Christian times, the site of the present ruins of the Nunnery on Carricknahorner was a favourite resort of Druids. St. Patrick, in the course of his peregrinations around the Emerald Isle, reached this locality. The saint was resolved to “beard the lion in his den,” and expel the Druids from their awe-inspiring haunts. A long and fierce struggle ensued between the Powers of Light and those of Darkness. The saint was on the point of being worsted, when he bethought him of seeking the spiritual aid of some Holy Recluses, who lived in the vicinity. His fair allies, by their prayers, turned the scale of victory in his favour, and the Druids fled discomfited. As reward for their services, St. Patrick granted the surrounding land to the Recluses, and assisted them to build the Nunnery, or “House of the Black Ladies” (*Teach-na-g-caileachaid dubha*), and the recounter of this legend wound up his recital by exclaiming—“Shure and isn’t the building there to prove the truth of the story.” Part of the N.E. and S. walls are still standing, but the west wall has completely disappeared. A part of the interior is utilised as a potato garden. There is no trace of an arch. In the north wall is a door, the top composed of a large flag; both door and wall are employed by the utilitarian tenant to form a piggery. In the south wall is a small square recess; but the greater portion of the building has, on this side, subsided down the precipice, where its ruins lie strewn below.

Were the population and cattle withdrawn from the country, and but sufficient numbers of each left to represent the aggregate of these early days, this ideal scene of sylvan scenery extending over the country would in a generation be a stern reality. No one whose opportunities have allowed him to make the necessary observations can doubt, but given the above conditions, the entire district would be again covered with woods down to the water's edge. There might be exceptions with respect to particular or unfavourable localities, for it is a curious fact, that in the American forests vacant spaces are occasionally found, upon which, to all appearance, no tree has ever grown. Sligo remained well wooded till the commencement of the seventeenth century, when large quantities of timber were consumed in ironworks erected by enterprising English settlers, also by the exportation of pipe-staves. On the subject of this denudation of timber from the land, is an ancient saw :—

“ Ireland was thrice beneath the ploughshare,  
Thrice it was wood and thrice it was bare.”

The County of Sligo, however, possesses an extensive stool of timber, for on almost every dry knoll and cliff, oak, birch, ash, and hazel, together with holly, appear to shoot up in abundance, requiring only a little care to rise into valuable woods.

What a world of change we live in! Where formerly impenetrable brakes and woods existed, is it not an astonishing transformation to find that a tree is a strange and rare object in the landscape?<sup>1</sup> “Change and decay in all around I see,” is the lesson taught us of the scenes below. It was not till the middle of the eighteenth century that reclamation of bogs on any large scale commenced. In 1750 the baronies of Corran and Tireragh were continuous sheep-walks, whilst in 1776, a quarter of a century later, they were covered with potatoes and barley.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> So rare, in fact, in some districts, that an anecdote told by Young in his travels through Mayo, *circum* 1776, is, or was at a very recent period, applicable to parts of Sligo: “A farmer, living in Erris, accompanied by his son, a young lad, left that barony, in which not a single tree grew, to journey to Killala. On approaching that village, the youth, for the first time, saw a tree, and exclaimed: ‘O Lord, father! what is that?’”

<sup>2</sup> Young's Tour in Ireland, 1776-9.

*Lake Dwellings.*

Sligo was a land of lakes<sup>1</sup> as well as of forests; they were thickly scattered over the face of the country—lakes of irregular shape, connected by stagnant shallows, “now land, now lake, and shores with forest crowned.” They were all rendered beautiful by the surrounding woodland, yet the beauty of each was distinct in kind. Some of the lakes are studded with islands—rising mounds, on which birch and oak stand side by side with pine and beech. On these islands were the huts of the aborigines, at a sufficient distance from the mainland to render their isolation a means of safety; for in a retreat of this nature they were secure from their enemies and from prowling wolves, and with their canoes run up on the beach, could feel secure from surprise. Other lakes were broad sheets of water; the majority, however, of small size, half marsh, half water, fringed with forest and abounding in fish. On these lakes the huts of the aborigines, with their conical roofs, would appear as if floating on the water; the inmates who are neither fishing nor engaged in the chase, might be supposed to lounge lazily about on the staging, or to occupy themselves in forming weapons, or in mending their birch canoes or wicker-work cots moored near the hut. The lake-dweller from vegetable fibre made nets, with which he obtained an ample supply of fish from the waters around him; but sometimes have been found traces of grain coarsely ground, seeds, beech and hazel nuts, the remains of quadrupeds, birds, and fish, attesting the indiscriminate nature of his appetite. He had probably, too, the same fondness for drinks sweetened with wild honey, which in later ages gave to bee-keeping an important place in Brehon law. As friend and helper, he had his faithful dog; but of his joys and sorrows, his loves and his hates, we know nothing.

“Rugged type of primal man,  
Grim utilitarian,  
Loving woods for hunt and prowl,  
Lake and hill for fish and fowl.”

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<sup>1</sup> The white shell marl at the bottom of peat bogs in low-lying situations was formerly covered by water, till gradually displaced by the encroachment of the surrounding bogs and by vegetation.



The Irish lake-dwellings do not appear to have been built like those of Helvetia,<sup>1</sup> on platforms supported by piles driven deeply into the mud. The aborigines of Ireland selected generally a shoal or shallow in the lake. In this they drove stakes, on which were rested cross-beams. A foundation sufficiently large to support the intended hut was then formed by filling up the space with layers of small trees, earth, and stones, till the substructure was raised to the required height over the waters; on this was erected the wooden hut of the lake-dweller. Some of these structures were of great extent—small colonies, on which several families took up their abode. In almost every instance a collection of flat stones has been discovered near the centre of the enclosure, apparently serving as a hearth. Sometimes two or three such hearths were found in different parts of the area formerly occupied by the settlement. These lake-dwellings were used from remote prehistoric times down even to the close of the sixteenth century; whilst the lake-dwellings of Helvetia, as far as at present known, disappear about the first century of the Christian era.

So late as the year 1477, it is stated by the Four Masters, that on the night of the festival of St. John the Baptist, a violent tempest swept over the kingdom, which did much damage, especially to the crannoges, or lake-dwellings. Had they not been still numerous, the Annalists would not have pointed out the special destruction thus wrought. The existence of this very ancient form of habitation was doubtless prolonged in consequence of the restless feuds and unsettled state of the country.

Lake-dwellings are frequently mentioned in the Annals of the Four Masters.<sup>2</sup> The remains of many have been discovered and described. In the Irish language these residences were termed *crannoges*, from *crann*, a tree, signifying literally, a wooden structure, and is applied not only to the wooden hut, but also to the artificial substructure. Two crannoges rested on Glencar Lake in olden times. Of the origin of what must have been the larger of the two situated at the eastern extremity of the lake, in the County of Leitrim, nothing whatever is known; there is

<sup>1</sup> The ancient and classical name of Switzerland.

<sup>2</sup> In A.D. 1246, 1436, 1452, 1455, 1477, 1500, 1512, 1524, 1541, 1560, and 1603.

no legend or tradition extant to throw the halo of romance around it; but the smaller crannoge is supposed to have been a "fishing lodge" of the renowned Dermot.

In "the legend of Ben-Bulbin," mention is made of "the dwelling on the lake." The two crannoges above-named were discovered not many years ago by the late Right Hon. John Wynne, when he caused the surplus water to be drawn off the lake by draining. The smaller of the two, which was situated nearest to Ben-Bulbin, and in the County of Sligo was supposed to be the remains of "the dwelling" referred to in the dialogue between the rivals in the legend. Directly across the mountain there is a natural cavern in the limestone-rock, called to this day "Dermot and Grainné's bed; and beneath this lies the valley of Gleniff, embosomed in an amphitheatre of hills.

The only instance discovered in the county in which this primitive form of human habitation has given name to a locality occurs near Longford Demesne, barony of Tireragh, where, in a small lake, situated near the residence of Sir Malby Crofton, Bart., is an islet still called "crannoge" by the country-people, and which has bequeathed its name to the townland of Lochanacrannoge, *the little lake of the crannoge*. The peasantry say that "crannoge" signifies the hopper of a mill, and that in all probability there was formerly a mill in the neighbourhood. This is the popular explanation given of every "crannoge" in the kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

The erection of lake-dwellings is attributable to special circumstances, and is by no means characteristic of any one particular race of man. They were used by the Chinese and Turanians, as well as by the Aryans. Herodotus describes lake-dwellings as existing in Thrace in the fifth century B.C., and similar habitations are yet constructed and inhabited by the savages of New Guinea.

In the progress of many centuries this state of things in Ireland gradually changed; forests were partially cleared; pasturage became more ample; wild animals diminished in number; and sheep and oxen increased; population, at the same time, became more generally spread over the country; but there is no means

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.



of ascertaining to what extent villages on *terra firma* may have existed during the primal lacustrine period.

### *Wolves.*

From the hills and forests, in which the lakes, with their crannoges were surrounded—

“Cruel as death, and hungry as the grave,  
Burning for blood, bony and gaunt and grim,  
Assembling wolves in raging troops descend,  
And pouring o’er the country bear along,  
Keen as the north wind sweeps the glossy snow,  
All as their prize——.”

How startled a nineteenth-century inhabitant of Sligo would be were he to hear the weird voice of these former denizens of the country, now happily unknown, where, for centuries, every rock and nook nightly echoed their fear-inspiring howls. The last wolf killed in the County of Sligo was about the year 1700. The ravages of these animals became so great after the wars of 1641 as to excite the attention of the State. Wolf hunters were appointed to rid the country of these ferocious animals; but if credence is to be given to the following anecdote, wolves were a much maligned race. A Sligo Androcles found a wolf lying on the ground moaning and in great apparent agony. On examination, he found in the wolf’s foot a great thorn, which he extracted, and tended the animal till its recovery. One morning this man missed his patient, and heaped curses on the truant’s head; but imagine his astonishment, when shortly after the grateful beast was seen reappearing, in company with another wolf, driving between them a fine fat cow, which they placed, unharmed, before the poor man’s hut. The finding of the cow was proclaimed at all the chapels. It is needless to say that the laudable endeavour to discover a lawful owner was unsuccessful, or that, finally, the poor man, by his own industry, and the assistance of the wolves, became the wealthiest farmer in the district.

### *Sus Scrofa.*

In the woods and marshes dwelt numerous herds of wild swine (*sus scrofa*). The chase of these animals was the chief amuse-



ment of warriors when not engaged in war. The Irish Nimrod, Finn Mac Cumhail, flourished in the reign of Cormac Mac Art, A.D. 218-266. Finn and his companions, celebrated by tradition and legend, are supposed to have selected certain favourite hills on which to rest and feast after their sporting expeditions. Of these hills, generally crowned by a cairn, and called Seefin,<sup>1</sup> i.e., Finn's Seat or resting-place, several are found in Sligo, of which Seefin, in the parish of Kilfree, near another townland, anglicised Chacefield, is the most remarkable.

The story of one of Finn Mac Cumhail's hunts in the county is related yet amongst the country-people, and is as follows :—

On the day that Finn Mac Cumhail was to be married to Grainné, daughter of Cormac Mac Art, the wedding dinner was prepared by Dermot O'Deena, a celebrated *chef* (*de cuisine*). On the neck of Dermot was a mole, which possessed the magic power of causing any woman who gazed on it to fall desperately in love with Dermot, who, on this occasion, heated by his culinary work, loosened his throat-fastening, thus exposing to view the magic spot. Grainné, who chanced to see it, fell so desperately in love that she eloped with Dermot. In vain Finn pursued them through mountains and fastnesses during a period of twelve months; they eluded pursuit by sleeping in a different place each night, under those cromlechs called *Leaba Dhiarmada-agus-Grainné*, Dermot and Grainné's bed, erected by Dermot after each day's journey. At length, Finn Mac Cumhail decided to inaugurate a boar hunt. This plan he considered must be successful, as Dermot could not refrain from joining a hunt whenever he heard the music of the hounds. Finn obtained a wild boar, renowned for its ferocity, which he placed in a pit, and put over him a large flag, giving orders that the boar should be kept thus confined until his rage, excited by the pangs of hunger, should enable him to burst through the impediment to his freedom. Finn stationed hounds in various places, at Killala, Jamestown, and all along the Shannon, so as to prevent the escape of the boar. At length, rendered frantic by hunger, the imprisoned animal managed to lift the confining flag. Finn pursued with hound and horn as far as Bealath Grainné, near

<sup>1</sup> Suidh-Finn.

Collooney, where, at the time, Dermod was concealed, who, on hearing the baying of hounds, joined the hunt, despite the entreaties of Grainné that he should remain at home—

“ Ah! gentle dames! it gars me greet  
To think how mony counsels sweet,  
How mony lengthen’d sage advices  
The husband frae the wife despises!  
But to our tale——.”

As Dermod emerged from his hiding-place the boar ran between his legs, carrying him away astride on his back—

“ Away, away, my steed and I,  
.  
.  
.  
Town, village, none were on our track,  
But a wild plain of far extent,<sup>1</sup>  
And bounded by a forest black.”<sup>2</sup>

At last, poor Dermod, who had not the advantage of being bound Mazeppa-like to his steed, became giddy with the pace, and exhausted by his exertions in holding on to the pig’s bristles, he relaxed his grasp, tumbled off, and was severely injured. The fall occurred at Tobernabostul, near Ben-Bulbin, where he was found by Finn, who was so moved at his lamentable plight that, instead of then wreaking vengeance on his rival, he asked if he could afford him relief.

Dermod thereupon entreated Finn to go to a place indicated by him, there pull up a bunch of rushes, when a spring would at once arise, three drinks of which would cure him.

During Finn’s absence on this errand the boar returned and attacked Dermod, who, though greatly disabled, managed by superhuman exertions to grasp the fore and hind legs of the boar, and to pull him in pieces just as the dying animal succeeded in ripping Dermod asunder.<sup>3</sup>

On returning with the magic drink, Finn was agreeably surprised to find his enemy dead; but in his first surprise he allowed the water, which he was carrying in the palm of his

<sup>1</sup> Plain of Magherow.

<sup>2</sup> Forests of Ben-Bulbin and Glencar.

<sup>3</sup> Let not Kilkenny boast of its cats, Sligo can match its tails.



hand, to pour through his fingers, and on the spot where it fell the well of *Tober-na-bostul* sprang up.

Finn was not equally generous to his enemy in death as in life, for he cut off his head, and brought it back to Bealath Grainné as a present to his runaway bride. When the beautiful but hapless Grainné rushed from her dwelling to meet her husband, she saw but his freshly-severed head; in a paroxysm of despair she fell dead, and all the hunters of the county wept tears of sorrow for the brave and the fair. Grainné's corpse was carried to repose with that of her husband on the mountain slope, in the townland of Gleniff, in the parish of Rossinver, under a monument still called *Dermod and Grainné's Bed*.<sup>1</sup>

Myths frequently represent distorted historical facts, fast-fading traditions. Dermod is represented as an accomplished cook, and an enthusiastic hunter. May it not be conjectured that his culinary proclivities denote the indulgence of the stomach to have been his weakness, and may not the object of his chase, the boar that attacked him, be emblematic of the fatal result occasioned by his own unrestrained gluttony.

Besides herds of wild swine, goats and a species of sheep abounded amongst the crags and mountains.

<sup>1</sup> There are other versions of the tale, as recounted amongst the country-people, which differ slightly from the above. One of these states that when Finn found the runaway couple he affected to forgive them, on condition that Dermod should promise never to hunt within the bounds of his territory; but, aware of Dermod's unconquerable love of sport, Finn caused the boar hunters to pass near Dermod's dwelling, certain that he would join in the chase, and thus afford Finn an excuse for taking his life, &c.; &c. A cruel act of Dermod's was supposed to have produced his death. His infant son, by Grainné, was at nurse with a swine herd, on an island or crannoge in the lake of Templevanny. Dermod went to see it, but on perceiving that the swineherd's child was finer than his own, dashed out its brains. The swineherd seized a suckling pig (showing that even at that early date pigs shared the house with human occupants), and dashing it against the doorpost, prayed that the slayer of his child might meet the fate of the pig, and on the following day Dermod was killed by the boar. This history of "The Pursuit of Dermod and Grainné" has been recently translated from the Gaelic by P. W. Joyce, and published in "Old Celtic Romances." The narrative, as given in this work, is taken from unpublished Letters, written at the period of the Ordnance Survey, and in which are embodied many oral traditions of the peasantry as recounted by them in 1837.



*Megaceros Hibernicus.*

A very large deer, the *Megaceros Hibernicus*, or Irish Big Horn, though traces of it have been found elsewhere in Europe, seems to have made Ireland its chosen home. There is good reason to believe that this great deer and man were contemporaneous. Judging from the abundance in which its bones have been discovered, embedded in the peat and marl, it seems certain that this deer roved in large herds over the plains of Ireland, till the greater increase of population, in all probability, led to the destruction of the noble animal by the hands of man.

*Cervus-Elaphus.*

The red deer, *Cervus-Elaphus*, was, until a comparatively modern epoch, very numerous. These large animals herded for ages among the mountains of Sligo, and in 1684, when O'Flaherty wrote, they were very numerous. Doctor Thomas Molyneux, the friend and contemporary of O'Flaherty, says, "The red deer, in those our days, is much more rare with us in Ireland than it has been formerly." So late as 1752, they abounded in the barony of Erris, County of Mayo. The celebrated Irish scholar, O'Donovan, *circum* 1846, heard from an old native that in his youth large red deer were common, that he frequently saw them grazing on the hills among the black cattle.

Various species of bear also frequented the caves and rocks, the physical characteristics of the country being peculiarly favourable to their existence.

The following lines, from the pen of Sir Walter Scott, depict the former appearance of the County Sligo with such seeming fidelity, that it is to be regretted the mind of the great Scotchman had not drawn its inspiration from scenery in the West of Ireland—

"When these waste glens with copse were lined,  
And peopled with the hart and hind.

. . . . .

Yon lonely thorn, would he could tell  
The changes of his parent dell.

. . . . .

Would he could tell how deep the shade,  
A thousand mingled branches made ;

How broad the shadows of the oak,  
How clung the rowan to the rock,  
And through the foliage showed his head  
With narrow leaves, and berries red ;  
What pines on every mountain sprung,  
O'er every dell what birches hung,  
In every breeze what aspens shook,  
What alders shaded every brook ?  
' Here in my shade,' methinks he'd say,  
' The mighty stag at noontide lay ;  
The wolf I've seen, a fiercer game,  
. . . . .  
With lurching steps around me prowl,  
And stop against the moon to howl ;  
The mountain boar, on battle set,  
His tusks upon my stem would whet ;  
While doe and roe, and red deer good,  
Have bounded by through gay green wood.' "

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## CHAPTER III.

### TOPOGRAPHY, ETC.

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“The world’s a theatre, the earth a stage,  
Which God and nature do with actors fill.”

“What a fair dwelling is this world of ours,  
Varied and beautiful on every hand ;  
The fertile vales, the mountains tall and grand,  
The fresh green fields, all carpeted with flowers,  
The genial sunshine, the refreshing showers,  
The great deep awful sea, the teeming land,  
The solemn forests that majestic stand.”



THE district forming the present County of Sligo adjoins the Counties of Leitrim, Roscommon, and Mayo ; on its north is the bay of Donegal. The greatest extent from east to west is about forty-one miles, and from north to south about thirty-eight miles. It contains 461,796 acres, of which 123,000 acres are bog, waste, and mountain, and 12,740 acres are water. It is divided into six baronies and thirty-seven parishes, with four parts of parishes ; portions of it are included in the dioceses of Elphin, Ardagh, Achonry, and Killala.

There is great variety of scenery within the bounds of the county : bold cliffs, romantic dells, as at Glencar and Knocknarea ; well-wooded demesnes, as at Hazlewood, Annaghmore, and Hollybrook ; lakes of rare beauty, which yet differ widely in feature, from the cultivated and picturesque surroundings of Lough Gill to the gloomy wild tarns of Lough Easkey and Lough Talt.

“The immense cloud-masses of the Atlantic soften the hues and outline of the landscape, drop fertility on the land, and



nourish the vegetation which has bequeathed to Erin the name of the Emerald Isle," and in no part of the kingdom does the country appear more verdant than around Sligo.

Mountain, sea, lake, and wood, all combine to render the scenery attractive, and were the planting not so much confined as it is, save in a very few instances, to the demesnes of the gentry—if, in short, it could be said that the country in general was well wooded—then, indeed, the picture of beauty would be perfect.

The soil differs greatly in quality, from the very best pasture and arable land to the most barren moor and bog; and whilst in one part of the county the natural richness of the soil enables potatoes to be grown without manure, in other parts hundreds, even thousands, of acres consist of deep wet bog, producing only heather.

The surface of the country is much diversified; there are numerous mountains, hills, and rivers, which intersect it in every direction. To the north-east of the county, between it and Leitrim, stretches a range of mountains, which terminates in the lofty cliffs of Ben-Bulbin. There are also Cope's Mountain, Keellogyboy, and Knocknarea. The Ox Mountains, to which Slish and Slieve Dæane may be considered to belong, extend from the County of Leitrim into Mayo, through Sligo, dividing the latter county into two parts. This range is pierced by several passes, through which run roads from the northern to the southern divisions of the county. Of these passes, the principal are: one between Slish and Slieve Dæane, through which lies the road leading from Sligo to Ballintogher; one by Ballydawley Lake, through which runs the road to Ballyfarnon; the valley through which the river Owenmore makes its way to the sea, in which lies the road from Sligo to Boyle; and a little to the east of this, higher up in the Slieve Dæane Mountains, is another pass, near Ballydawley, through which formerly ran the road from Sligo towards Ballyfarnon and Boyle. There are three other passes between the baronies of Leyny and Tireragh; one leads from the little village of Coolaney to the sea; the second, called the Ladies' Brae, lies some distance to the west of this; and the third passes by Lough Easkey to the village of Dromore West.

The Slieve Anierin<sup>1</sup> Mountains form part of the eastern boundary between Sligo and the Counties of Leitrim and Roscommon. To the south, near Ballinafad, are the Bricklieve Mountains, and in close proximity lies the Curlew range, which divides Roscommon and Sligo. Kesh Corran, near Ballymote, Knocknashee and Muckelty, near Tobereurry, stand out boldly from the neighbouring plains.

At the south-west angle of the county the Ox Mountains are again divided near Lough Talt by a pass locally known as "The Gap" (in Irish *Bearnas*), through which runs the road from Tobereurry to Ballina.

Sligo possesses numerous sheets of water. Lough Gill and Glencar Lake are rendered exceptionally beautiful by their surrounding scenery, and Lough Arrow is celebrated for its trout fishing. There is a lake at Templehouse, adjoining the mansion of that name, and close by is Cloonacleigha Lake. In the south Lough Gara is situated between Sligo and Roscommon; Lough Easkey and Lough Talt, in the barony of Leyny. In addition, there are small mountain lakes or tarns, many of which afford fair trout fishing, but from the difficulty of access they are little frequented.

The rivers of Sligo are numerous; the following are most worthy of note: The Duff, which forms the north-east boundary between Sligo and Leitrim; the Drumcliff river, which flows from Glencar Lake to the sea at Drumcliff Bridge; the Doonally river, which rises in the mountains between Leitrim and Sligo, and falls into the sea at Cartron. The river Garvogue runs from Lough Gill through the town of Sligo; the Bonnett and Arigna rivers form part of the eastern boundary of Sligo, Leitrim, and Roscommon. The Unshin rises in Lough Arrow, and falls into the river Owenmore, near Collooney; the Owenmore takes its rise in the Curlew mountains, and flows past Ballymote, Templehouse, Annaghmore, and Collooney, falling into the sea at Ballisodare; it serves to drain about 112 square miles of country, and receives in its course the river Owenbeg, together with several smaller streams. The Moy takes its rise in the Ox Mountains, and flowing in a westerly direction, receives the

<sup>1</sup> *Sliabh-an-iarainn*, the mountain of the iron, in allusion to its richness in iron ore.

waters of numerous tributaries; a description of its course may be found in the Ogygia. This river “flows from Lugnia (Leyny), a district in the County of Sligo, into Galenga, in the County of Mayo, and entering the ocean, divides both counties, Tir-fiacria being on the County of Sligo, and Tir-amalgaid on the County of Mayo side.” On the banks of this river are three round towers and several interesting remains of abbeys. The fishery of the Moy,<sup>1</sup> which anciently appertained to the Abbey of Cong, is one of the most considerable in the kingdom.

The geological structure of Sligo is not very varied.<sup>2</sup> In the north-east the calp sandstones and limestones of the carboniferous formation appear on the flanks of the great masses of limestone which form the mountain ranges. Slish, Slieve Dæane, and the Ox range are immense masses of mica schist, with granite appearing near Lough Easkey. From under the Ox Mountains, on both north and south flanks, appears a narrow band of Devonian, or old red sandstone; beyond this stretches the carboniferous formation, showing near Beltra a small portion of calp sandstone, and west of it the lower limestone and limestone slates. The country to the north, as well as to the south of the Ox Mountains, is covered, especially near Easkey, with granite boulders, or “erratics.” Similar blocks have been found in the town of Sligo, showing that the drift in

<sup>1</sup> The following legend, taken from the “*Dinnsenchus*,” accounts for the name Magh Tibra, a locality situated at the mouth of the stream:—*Triul the Wise*, King of Ireland, in the course of his journey through the kingdom, arrived at the mouth of the Moy, then called the *Inver of Carnglas*. There he was met by his foster-mother, Tiber, daughter of Cas-Clothach, of the Tuatha de Danans. Tiber led the monarch to her dun, or dwelling, then called Magh Glas, and there the king sickened and died. His subjects carried off the body for interment to the Pagan cemetery at Croghan. The grief of Tiber for the death of her foster-son was so great that she threw herself into the sea; her body was cast ashore by the waves, and buried in the plain near the strand. From her, Magh Tibra is named. *Tulchan-na-ngairthe*, i.e., the Hillock of Lamentation, derives its name from the *keening* of the people of the *baile*, or locality, bewailing the death of the king and his foster-mother.

<sup>2</sup> The mountain or carboniferous limestone, the lower limestone, calp or black shale series, and the upper limestone, constitute the basis of the greater portion of the county.



the county must have been towards the north, as well as towards the south.

The geological formation south of the Ox range belongs to the carboniferous series, principally the lower and upper limestone; but on reaching the Slieve Anieren Mountains the lower coal measures are met with. In this range are situated the iron-works of Arigna; also the coal-fields of Sligo and Leitrim. These coal-fields were formed during a period when the earth was a vast storehouse—when in the heated and reeking atmosphere, the beautiful fronds of gigantic ferns covered with a shadow of deepest gloom an endless and impenetrable jungle of low-growing plants—a jungle uninhabited save by a few of the lowest class of reptiles. This was the time when the coal was formed; the carbon in the air, which made it unfit for man, was stored up in these plants; they were made to grow and to decay, and age after age to deposit their once beautiful fronds in layers, to become a black mass of coal for our use hereafter. The long bleak chain of the Geevagh Mountains, between Ballintogher and Lough Allen, was once a dense forest of this kind, as also the Slieve Anieren range.<sup>1</sup> The limestone, especially along the shore from Inishcroane to Dirk, is intersected by trap dykes, which strike nearly due east and west. Sulphate of copper and iron pyrites are frequently found in small pieces, and copper in some of the river beds. Manganese has also been discovered in various localities, but never in sufficient quantity to make the working remunerative.

The County of Sligo affords a field of study to the botanist, the painter, and the antiquarian. In the mountains and valleys are rare ferns and alpine plants. It possesses the most picturesque and varied landscapes, and abounds in objects of striking interest to the antiquarian, for many scenes of battle or skirmish, dating from the most remote times, can be identified. Some of the earliest seats of Christian learning are to be found within its limits, as also several of the earliest known pagan monuments, contrasting in their hoary antiquity with the remains of castles and fortified houses of the settlement which belong to nearer epochs. Of these, the largest castles are

<sup>1</sup> Lecture on the "Geology of Ireland," by Col. Ffolliott, 1872.

Moygara and Ballymote. There are also ruins of castles at Templehouse and Ballygara, and, of more modern date, Ard-tarmon, Grange, Ardnaglass, Laccan, and Cottlestown; also at Bellahy, Belclare, Ballinafad, Bricklieve, &c. Remains of fortified houses are at Castlebaldwin, Ballincar, Inishcroane, &c., &c. These may all be recognised by the high gables and chimneys peculiar to that style of architecture. Castles, and that class of buildings, are apt to disappear with greater rapidity than a careless observer would imagine, for which various causes may be assigned, such as destruction simply by the hand of time, employment of the building materials for other purposes. In the preface to his "Irish Pedigrees," Duaid MacFirbis, *circum* 1660, thus describes their disappearance, even within his memory:—"Sixteen years ago I saw many high castles of lime and stone at places where nothing now remains but earthen mounds, and no one could possibly know that there ever had been any other works. We are not, therefore, to be surprised that so few remain of the buildings erected two or three thousand years ago."

#### *Barony of Carbury.*

Carbery, a son of Nial, was the ancestor of the Cenil-Carbery, some of whom settled in the north of the present County of Longford, and some took possession of the territory in Sligo named after them. In the Annals the adjunct *Droma-chliabh* is given to distinguish it from other districts of like name.

The first mention of Carbury is in A.M. 4694, at which period Melghe Molbthach, King of Ireland, was killed in battle; when his grave was being dug, the waters of Lough Melghe burst forth and spread over the land of Carbury: thence the lake was named after him. This beautiful lake, situated on the confines of the counties of Fermanagh, Leitrim, and Donegal, is now called Lake Melvin; no part of it is at the present date comprised in Carbury, though part of the parish of Rossinver, which takes its name from a headland in the lake, is still included in the barony.

The gradual curtailment of ancient districts, which finally shrank within their present limits, may frequently be noticed. There are numerous instances where names have disappeared

altogether, or linger obscurely as denominations of townlands, often as mere sub-denominations of the latter. Occasionally the name exists, and is still employed by the country-people to denote a district, but without appearing as such in the Ordnance Survey. *Cuil-irra* affords a good example of this.

The next mention of Carbury occurs A.D. 766, when Cathal, Lord of Carbury-more,<sup>1</sup> died. A.D. 787, Cathmugh, Lord of Carbury, fell in battle, fighting against the inhabitants of Tirer-rill. A.D. 949, Niall Mothlach O'Canannan was slain by the inhabitants of Carbury-more. A.D. 974, Fergal, Lord of Carbury-more, fell in an expedition against the inhabitants of Offaly, in Leinster. A.D. 1029, it is related in the Annals that Hugh O'Rorke, Lord of Dartry and Carbury, and Angus O'Hennessy, *Airchinneach*<sup>2</sup> of Drumcliff, with sixty other people,

<sup>1</sup> O'Donovan considered the addition of the word *more* to be a mistake of the Four Masters.

<sup>2</sup> The inferior title of *Airchinneach*, or Erenach, originally meant an archdeacon, who, according to ancient discipline, was the manager of the property of the Church. By degrees this office fell into the hands of laymen, who consequently assumed the title of archdeacon. In the middle ages several archdeacons are found in one and the same diocese, some called majores, others minores. In the course of time the Erenachs became exceedingly numerous in Ireland. They were universally laymen, except that they were tonsured, on which account they were ranked among the clerici, or clerks. In fact, in course of time the Erenachs became the actual possessors of old church lands, out of which they paid certain contributions, either in money or kind, towards ecclesiastical purposes.

*Comharba*, or *coarb*, is applied to the successor or representative of the patron saint or original founder of a monastery, priory, or any ecclesiastical establishment; or successor of a bishop, as the *coarb* of St. Patrick, that is, the successor or representative of St. Patrick, at Armagh, as applied to the primates. The term *Comarban* is applied in the same sense by many writers. Some of the *coarbs* in latter times were laymen, and possessed lands belonging to episcopal sees, paying, however, certain mensal dues to the bishops who did not hold the lands in demesne. On the whole, it appears that the *coarbs*, *erenachs*, and *airchinneachs* were in ancient times the managers of Church Lands.

*Biatachs* were an order of persons very numerous in Ireland in ancient times, appointed to keep houses of hospitality for the entertainment of travellers and the poor; and the establishments over which they presided had endowments and grants of land for the public use, and free enter-



were burnt to death in Inis-na-lainne,<sup>1</sup> an island off Carbury. Three short entries conclude all that is known of Carbury up to the Anglo-Norman invasion. In 1032, Morogh, Lord of Carbury, died; in 1084, Donogh O'Rorke, with the inhabitants of Carbury, were totally defeated and slain by the Danes and their Irish allies, in the County of Kildare; finally, in 1153, Flaherty O'Canannan, Lord of Cenil Conail, and his wife, Dubhechobhlaigh, daughter of Torlagh O'Conor, were drowned on the coast of Carbury, with all their ship's crew.

From the "Life of St. Maolhog," it may be inferred that part of Carbury was anciently comprised in Brefney, *i.e.*, the present County of Leitrim, which extended into the County of Sligo as far as Drumcliff and the hill of Knocklane. "Hugh the Fair gave unto Maolhog the tribute of every house from Drogheda to Knocklane, and from Erne to Shannon, as an offering for having baptized him (Hugh), and for having (like a Madame Rachel) changed his complexion from dark to fair."

Modern Carbury extends along the coast from the river Duff to Ballisodare Bay, and is bounded inland by the baronies of Tirerrill and Leyny, also by the County of Leitrim. Carbury comprises 78,884 acres, and is divided into the parishes of Ahamlish, Drumcliff, Calry, St. John's, Killaspugbrone, Kilmacowen, and part of Rossinver.

Between this barony and the County of Leitrim lies a range of mountains which extends, with but few breaks, from Garrison to Lough Gill, in Sligo. Along the shore from Bundoran to the latter town, these mountains present a very bold and striking appearance, having a long talus, or steep slope, at foot, ending above in abrupt precipices, deeply furrowed by the action of water. Of these mountains facing the sea, Ben-Bulbin, the

tainment for all persons who stood in need of it; and from these arose the term Ballybiatach, so common in Ireland as a name for a townland, which signified land appropriated for these purposes. In early times these appear to have been used for supporting the military on their march.

The word is derived from *Biadh*, food, and *teach*, a house.—*Connellan's edition of the Four Masters*, pp. 13, 43.

<sup>1</sup> *Inis-na-lainne* means literally Sword Island. The name is now obsolete, and the island has not been identified.

most westerly, takes its name, Ben-Gulban, Gulban's Peak, from Gulban, son of Nial of the Nine Hostages, who was fostered near it; he was ancestor of the O'Donnells. At the period of the Ordnance Survey, it is stated that the country-people interpreted the name thus: *Bin*, a high peak, and *bulbin*, storms, *i.e.*, the peak of the storms. O'Donovan considered this a fantastical derivation.

Ben-Bulbin is the most remarkable point of the range, and forms a very conspicuous object, standing out distinct from the neighbouring mountains, its steep slope rising to the height of 1,722 feet above the sea-level. Next to Ben-Bulbin is seen Ben-Weesken, presenting a knife-like edge on the Bundoran side; it has several deep fissures, one of which is remarkable for its size. Between Ben-Weesken and the neighbouring mountain, lies the large valley of Gleniff, extending about three miles into the mountain range, and in shape somewhat resembling a horse-shoe. On the east side of this glen is Truskmore, 2,113 feet above the sea-level, being the highest point in the County of Sligo. In the south-western angle of this glen, near the summit of tremendous precipices which rise 1,965 feet in height, barytes, a heavy spar, is found in large quantities. Some years ago an attempt was made to work it; an apparatus for lowering the ore from the top of the cliff was set up, but the works were very soon abandoned.

The Glencar Mountains run in an easterly direction from the angle of Ben-Bulbin. To the south, the beautiful valley of Glencar separates Cope's Mountain from this range; but nearly all these mountains have bold precipitous sides, and their grey limestone cliffs present the appearance of ancient weather-beaten fortifications. The southern slopes of the Glencar range, up to the foot of these precipices, are clothed with fir plantations, the lake beneath reflecting their graceful shapes. The rain which falls on the summits of these mountains descends to the vale in numerous streamlets, which, after a continuance of wet weather, seem at a distance like silver threads on the mountain-side. Some of these form waterfalls of considerable height. One of them is called in Irish *Sruth-an-ail-an-ard*, *i.e.*, the stream against the height, from the singular and deceptive appearance it presents of the reversal of the ordinary laws of hydrology.

When the wind blows from one particular point, the water is either driven upwards and back against the mountain, or it is blown outwards from it in a sheet of spray like a pennant.

The popular belief is, that Glencar takes its name from the townland of Glen-Carbury, but Joyce states that it was called in Irish *Gleann-a-chairthe* (pronounced Glencarha), the glen of the pillar-stone. Its ancient name, as used by the Four Masters, was *Cairthe Muilcheann*, i.e., Mulkan's pillar-stone. The country-people pronounce it Glean Cairbre, and say that the continuation of the range eastward into Leitrim is called Slieve Carbury by the inhabitants of Drumcliff and Calry.<sup>1</sup>

The mountain range to the south of the valley terminates in the Peak of Keelogyboy, which rises to a height of about 1,450 feet, due east of which lies cairn-crowned Knocknarea, one of the most striking features of the barony. Over this entire tract, the upper limestone resting on the softer calp series, rises into a table-land, jutting out into bold headlands.

The coast line of Carbury varies in character. At Mullaghmore, and from Streedagh to Knocklane, it is wild and rocky, breaking into little bays, or, as near Knocklane, rising into lofty cliffs. There are also hard and firm strands near Bunduff, Roskeragh, Streedagh, Knocklane, Drumcliff, Rosses Point, Cummeen, and Culleenamore. At the latter place, as also at Streedagh, are sandhills rising to the height of from forty to fifty feet. Several years ago, the sands near Roughly began to move, and in a short time had completely covered two villages. The further advance of the blowing sands has been arrested by planting bent, and thus inducing a growth of grass, which has now converted these sands into valuable pasture-land. The late Lord Palmerston pursued a similar course of reclamation at Mullaghmore, with the addition of a thick belt of pines for shelter, and an encroachment of the sand was also stayed at Killaspugbrone,<sup>2</sup> in the district of Cuil-irra, by planting bent.

The whole coast is more or less exposed to the swell of the Atlantic. The only places of shelter for boats are Mullaghmore, Milkhaven, and Roughly.

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.

<sup>2</sup> See ante p. 9.



Carbury contains within its bounds the remarkable collection of prehistoric remains at Carrowmore already described, together with a fine example of a pagan sepulchre situated at Magheraghanrush, or the Deer Park,<sup>1</sup> on the road from Sligo to Manor-

<sup>1</sup> "It is on the summit of a hill, some 500 feet above the sea-level, and occupies a very commanding position, from which a wide extent of country can be viewed. The hill on which it is placed is composed of limestone rock, covered with a very thin coat of soil, frequently cropping out at the surface. The whole structure has a length of 144 feet 6 inches, and consists primarily of a rude oblong, or blunted oval, bounded by rough stones set on end. The principal area has a length of 50 feet 6 inches, and is 28 feet wide at the broadest part. At each extremity of this are what we shall call, for want of a better term, 'aisles.' At the western end is a single 'aisle' some 27 feet long and 12 feet 6 inches wide, which opens into the main portion by an entrance formed of two rude upright stones and a long apstone; the ope is about three feet high to the under side of the capstone, and about 5 feet 6 inches to the top, the capstone being about 8 feet long. This 'aisle' is divided at about halfway by two low stones, but so arranged as to allow of a passage between them; and the extremity of this part of the structure is closed by two immense upright blocks, the outermost one leaning against the other. These stones are about 6 feet high, and 7 feet long by 2 feet thick.

"Passing now to the western end of the central space, we find that there are two 'aisles' opening into it by means of similar rude low doorways or opes, consisting of two upright stones covered by capstones, all being of about the same height and general dimensions, viz., about 3 feet to under-side of capstone and 5 feet to top. These 'aisles' are of nearly the same length as the first, the northern one being 27 feet long, while the southern 'aisle' is 24 feet. Both are narrower than that first described, being respectively 8 feet and 9 feet 6 inches wide, and they are separated by a space resembling a central aisle, 5 feet 6 inches wide, but stopped off from the main portion by a large stone. Both these 'aisles' are divided nearly midway (like the first) by two opposite stones standing near the outer walls, so as to mark a kind of passage through the centre of the 'aisle.'

"*Exterior Structures.*—At each extremity there is a low mound, nearly circular, in which there are a number of small stones, now displaced, but apparently showing traces of artificial arrangement.

"*Side Entrance and Transept.*—At the south side, and near the centre of the principal enclosure, are some stones arranged in such position as to indicate an entrance; these consisting of four stones, two on each side, allowing a space or passage about 5 feet wide and about 10 feet long. One of the stones forming this is a massive block of limestone 6 feet

hamilton. There are also other cromlechs, circles, and cashels scattered over the district.

The capital of the county is in Carbury. The town of Sligo was anciently a fortified place, but no traces of the walls remain. Sligo is the most rising and important town in Connaught. The quays are commodious, and are being further extended; vessels of too large draught to moor alongside of them, have good and safe anchorage in "the pool," near the Rosses. Formerly in Sligo the manufacture of linen cloth was carried on; it has now entirely disappeared, but a brisk trade exists in the exportation of butter, grain, cattle, &c., and the importation of corn, timber, coal, iron, &c. Steamboats ply to Westport, Glasgow, and Liverpool. There is railway communication direct to Dublin; and the new line opened to Enniskillen, connecting Sligo with Dundalk, Belfast, and Derry, is one that will be of great benefit to the commercial community. The public buildings are the County Court House, the County Gaol, the Town Hall, the Infirmary, the Custom House (which is a most miserable erection), the Military and Constabulary Barracks, the Lunatic Asylum, and the Workhouse, a plain, but *costly* edifice. The houses of religious worship are two Protestant, two Roman Catholic, one Presbyterian, one Independent, one Methodist. The Parish Church of St. John's is cruciform in shape, with an ancient stone tower at the west end; the Parish Church of Calry is a more modern structure; the Roman Catholic Cathedral is large and imposing; the Dominican Friary is well designed. There are two Convents: one for Sisters of Mercy, the other for Ursuline Nuns.

The principal villages in the barony are Cliffony, Grange, and Carney—but they call for no remark, save that near the first-named village, within a few minutes' walk of the hamlet, may

wide and about 4 feet 6 inches high. There are a couple of stones to the west of them, which appear also to belong to the structure.

"There are upwards of ninety stones used in the existing part of the structure, not to mention numerous stones scattered within and around it.

"It is remarkable that there is no folk-lore with regard to this unique structure; tradition appears to be altogether silent about it."—*Extracts from a Paper "On a Remarkable Megalithic Structure near Sligo,"* by E. HARDMAN, *H.M. Geological Survey of Ireland.*

be observed a small building, in plan similar to the bee-hive huts to be seen in Innismurray. Its internal diameter is about 15 feet; the wall of considerable thickness, with a doorway or opening facing the west. A flight of steps, formed of very large stones, leads nearly to the bottom of the enclosure, which lies considerably below the level of the surrounding land.

The pool or bath is now represented by a mere puddle, drainage operations in the neighbourhood having cut off the supply of water, which was anciently conveyed by a channel, the mouth of which, formed like a flat-headed opening, such as we see in the ecclesiastical round towers, is still visible.<sup>1</sup>

This well is called Tober Brigid, and it is quite probable that at some period of her life Saint Brigid sojourned at this very spot. In one account of her life it is stated, that whilst in Con-naught she went to receive the Eucharist from Bishop Bron, a contemporary of St. Patrick, and Bishop of Killaspugbrone, near Strandhill. "Now, between this Church and St. Brigid's well, the distance is within an easy palfry-ride, or chariot-drive, and we may know from numerous ancient sculptured representations, as also from ecclesiastical and bardic history, that chariots of the fifth and some succeeding centuries were finely built, *findruine* embellished, with large spoke wheels and high-stepping, well-trained horses." At all events, there is strong presumptive evidence that St. Brigid was at one time in Carbury, where a well, or bath, bearing her name, is now to be found.

The Rev. John O'Hanlon, in his "Lives of the Irish Saints," gives the following account of an incident in the life of St. Brigid, which may be said to identify the pool or well near Cliffony:—

"We are told, also, that when St. Brigid dwelt in this part of the country she was often accustomed to seek a pool of cold water near the Monastery. There she remained immersed, while she prayed and wept, during the whole night. This vigorous mortification at one time she endured while the snow and frost prevailed, and in presence of one from among the sisterhood. But as this rough corporal treatment surpassed the powers of

<sup>1</sup> W. F. Wakeman, on certain wells situate in the north-west of Ireland. Published in the Journal of the Royal Historical and Archæological Association of Ireland, p. 374.



nature to endure for any continued length of time, so it pleased the goodness and mercy of God to prevent it by a miracle. On a night immediately following the occurrence related, Brigid went with the same companion to renew like austerities ; but on arriving at the pond, it was found to have become completely dry, nothing appearing but the exposed bottom sands. Surprised at this occurrence, the virgin returned home ; yet, at the earliest hour of day-break on the following morning, its waters were found to have returned to their usual level in the lough. St. Brigid resolved the third night similarly to repeat her practice, when a similar disappearance of the waters took place on her approach. These waters returned to the bed of the lough early on the following morning."

Mr. Wakeman thus describes the well. " There is no trace of cut stone, or apparently of cement, having been used in the building ; but on one of the steps referred to, two small Roman crosses, evidently of great antiquity, appear shallowly inscribed by the aid of a punching instrument. The most interesting feature, however, at the well or pool is a rather rough unhammered block of hard reddish sandstone, measuring 2 feet 11 inches in length, by 10 feet in breadth, and about 5 inches in thickness. This stone is apparently of the monumental class, and just one upon which an ogham inscription might be expected. It presents, however, no lettering of any kind ; but upon one of its larger faces has been deeply inscribed or punched, the figure of a cross, of the kind usually styled Celtic. . . . . There remains at St. Brigid's well no legend relative to sacred trout or other fish ; but on the Saint's Day, the first of February, each year a patron is held, during which pilgrims pass round the enclosure in a direction from east to west, ' the course of the sun,' at the same time performing what they doubtless believe to be religious rites. Upon other days solitary devotees appear, or there may be more than one ; and, as we find in the Far East, the surrounding bushes are more or less draped with humble offerings, the most valuable, probably, the poor people can afford."

About the period of the Anglo-Norman Invasion, the O'Dowds had extended their dominion by conquest over that portion of Carbury lying between Ballysodare, and the river of Drumcliff. O'Mulclohy (*O'Mailcluithi*) was chief of this tract ; this name

is now metamorphosed into Stone. *Maelcluithi*, signifies the youth of the game, and might have been correctly enough anglicised *Gamble*; but the people of Carbury, who are in these degenerate days very bad gamblers, and worse etymologists, were of opinion that *cluithi*, the latter part of the name, is an oblique form of *cloch*, a stone, and have so translated it.<sup>1</sup> *O'Scannail*, a name now anglicised Scanlon, was another chief of Carbury. His territory is thus described by an ancient Irish Poet—

“ A *small* land of most *extensive* tillage  
Of the green land of Beinn-Gulban.”

But a modern Irish poet depicts the territory of the chief with far greater idealization—

“ Where foams the white torrent and rushes the rill  
Down the murmuring slopes of the echoing hill,  
Where the eagle looks out from his cloud-crested crags,  
And the caverns resound with the panting of stags;  
Where the brow of the mountain is purple with heath,  
And the mighty Atlantic rolls proudly beneath.”

O'Nuadhan, a name now anglicised Noone, was chief of Callraidhe Laithim, a territory co-extensive with the present parish of Calry. Tradition says that the primitive inhabitants of this tract descend from Lughaidh Cal, and were hence called Cal-regians. The name Calry is thus derived from Cal, the grandson of Maceon, King of Ireland in the third century. Calry in Sligo was designated Callraidhe-Laithim, to distinguish it from other districts of a similar name, in different parts of the kingdom.

In Calry, and washed by the waters of Lough Gill, lies the townland of *Clogherbeg*, *i.e.*, the small stony ground, indented by Toberconnell Bay, and on its eastern shore is the celebrated *Tobar-Chonail*, St. Connell's Well, suggesting that the saint was formerly the patron of Calry parish; and tradition says his day was celebrated on the 2nd June, at this spring. Near the graves of some of the holiest saints, fountains of pure crystal spring water are said to have gushed forth in testimony of their spotless lives; and as St. Connell was a pillar of the Church in his day, worship at his well followed quite naturally as a form of gratitude for services rendered; gratitude being also a lively

<sup>1</sup> O'Donovan's Notes to Hy-Fiachrach.

expectation of services to come. Worship at holy wells has, like many other relics of the past, nearly died out; but "*Tous les Dieux ne sont pas partis*," as the French chanson says; for a nymph has now superseded the primitive Father, and many votaries frequent her shrine. If the nymph's rules be obeyed, any pilgrim who resorts thither is certain of obtaining his desire. The wisher, on bended knee, with hands clasped behind the back, takes a "deep, deep draught of the good" spring well, and then silently wishes. It is a *sine quâ non* that the pilgrim should not make known these wishes, and ill-natured people are heard to mutter that for this reason there are but few female votaries amongst the successful candidates. The well had a wonderful reputation, and till a very recent period, women would go down apparently half ashamed, whisper their wish, and drink in good hope of a fortunate result; thus water-worship, recommended by Seneca, tolerated by the Church in times of yore, is a *culte* not yet gone out. St. Connell must have been fond of water—in fact a primitive teetotaler—for not only is this well, but also a small islet not far from the shore, designated *Oilean Chonaill*, Connell's island.

In the townland of Colgagh is a hill called *Grianan Calry*;<sup>1</sup> it is situated immediately to the right of the road leading from Sligo to Manorhamilton.

*Grianan*, from *grian*, the sun, is interpreted by the country-people as signifying a place possessed of some quality or property superior to other localities. Some say—and this is a similar interpretation—that the hill was so called because it is so beautifully green in comparison with the bare rocky-mountains around, and because the sun shines on it sooner than on the neighbouring smaller hills. There is an old Irish saying which runs thus:—

“Connaught is the verdant spot<sup>2</sup> of Ireland,  
Carbury is the verdant spot of Connaught,  
Calry is the verdant spot of Carbury,  
This hill is the verdant spot of Calry.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Grianan* is explained by O'Donovan as (i.) A beautiful sunny spot. (ii.) A bower, or summer-house. (iii.) A balcony, or gallery to a house. (iv.) A royal palace.

<sup>2</sup> *Grianan*.

*MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*



Shannon Oughter, and Shannon Eighter,<sup>1</sup> or Upper and Lower Shannon, two townlands situated near the seashore, must not be forgotten ; they were often traversed by the Ulster-men when invading Sligo. Shannon is derived from the Irish *Sean-dun* old fort, pronounced Shandon, but anglicised in the western parts of Ireland to Shannon. "This name is better known, however, as that of a Church in Cork, celebrated in Father Prout's *chanson* :"—

" The bells of Shandon  
That sound so grand on  
The pleasant waters of the river Lee." <sup>2</sup>

In the survey of 1636 the only woods enumerated as then existing in the barony of Carbury were at " Carrowcriar," in the parish of Ahamlish ; at " Ballenagalagh," " Lisslarl," and " Glann," in the parish of " Drumcliff ;" and at Aghamore, in the parish of St. John.

#### *Barony of Tirerrill.*

This barony is bounded on the north by Carbury ; on the west by Leyny, and Corran ; on the south by the County of Roscommon ; and on the east by the County of Leitrim. The present name is a corrupted form of Tir-Oliolla, Oliolla's territory, derived from Oliolla, son of Eochy Moyvane, King of Ireland from A.D. 358-365. He was also brother of Nial, King of Ireland and of Fiachra, who settled in Tireragh. His posterity in the time of St. Patrick, and long afterwards, possessed the district.<sup>3</sup>

Tirerrill is divided into the parishes of Aghanagh, Ballynakill, Ballysodare (part of), Drumeolumb, Killadoon, Killerry, Kilmacallan, Kilmaetranny, Kilross, Shancough, and Tawnagh. It contains 79,596 acres, of which 4,397 acres are water.

The surface of the barony is rough and much broken by hills. To the north, mountains separate it from Carbury, to which access is given by three passes before described. To the southwest are the Bricklieve Mountains, of which the highest are Carrickahorna, 1,024 feet, and Carrowkeel, 1,062 feet. To the

<sup>1</sup> The "Shanun-ighter" of Strafford's Survey.

<sup>2</sup> Joyce's "Irish Names of Places," p. 281.

<sup>3</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

south is situated the range of the Curlews, rising to a height of from 795 to 813 feet. In the east are the mountains which separate Sligo from Leitrim, one summit rising to a height of 1,498 feet above the sea-level. Ranges of hills overhang the east side of Lough Arrow, continue to the village of Riverstown, and thence to the Ox Mountains. Much of the land is of indifferent quality, lying on a stiff subsoil, locally known as "daub," the surface covered with rushes; but on the sides of the mountains are some good grazing lands.

The geology of the barony presents little variety. The Seefin Mountains are Laurentian, with lower limestone on the flanks. This is succeeded by upper limestone, of which there are some beds good for building purposes near Ballinafad. The western part is Millstone Grit, the summits of the mountains capped by coal measures, in which are numerous pits in work at present; the coal is used for burning lime.

The Unshin, the Douglas, and the Arigna are the principal rivers. The Arrow, or Unshin, rises in Lough Arrow, flows in a northerly direction through the barony, and falls into the Owenmore, near Markree. Unshin is evidently a corruption of the Irish word *funshan*, ash, or abounding in ash. The total silence of the letter *f* in aspiration appears to be the cause of its present form. Joyce says, in the case of many words, the writers "of Irish seem either to have inserted or omitted it (*f*) indifferently, or to have been uncertain whether it should be inserted or not; and so we often find it omitted, even in very old authorities, from words where it was really radical, and prefixed to other words to which it did not belong."<sup>1</sup>

The scenery along the banks of the river, though fine, does not quite equal the enthusiastic description given of it by McParlan, in his statistical survey of the county:<sup>2</sup> "The river Marne meandering by Chalons, and through some of the finest parts of France, does not in the same distance embrace more charms than the Unshin does descending from Lough Arrow and Hollybrook, by Coopershill, Mercury, and the Onion Woods, till determined to die, as it lived, in pleasure, it expires in the beau-

<sup>1</sup> Joyce, I. N. P., p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Dublin, 1802, p. 7.



tiful cascade of Ballysodare, and there mixes with the waters of the ocean."

The Douglas River falls into the Unshin near Riverstown. It derives its name from the Irish *Dubh-ghlaise*, Blackwater. On its banks, in the townland of Carrowcashel, stood formerly the Castle of Douglas, a name more familiar to Scottish than to Irish ears. The Arigna River flows through the valley, between the Arigna mountains in Leitrim and the Sligo Mountains, thus forming part of the eastern boundary between the two counties.

The lakes in Tirerrill are Ballydawley Lake in the north, and Castledargin Lake; Lough Bo, Lough Arrow, and Lough Skean in the south. Lough Arrow is a large and beautiful sheet of water, with well-wooded shores; it lies between the Bricklieve Mountains on the west, and the hills of Highwood on the east, and is famed for its trout-fishing. Near Aghanagh are to be found stumps of oak in this lake, from which it may be inferred that the inlet near Ballinafad was formerly covered with forest. It is difficult to account for the presence of these stumps; for to the north the surplus waters of the lake escape over a limestone ledge, and form the Unshin River; so the level of the waters cannot have much changed during recent times. The watershed of this part of the country lies between Lough Arrow, in Sligo, and Lough Key, a short way off in Roscommon; the waters falling on the one side flow into Lough Key and the neighbouring lakes, thence by the river Shannon into the sea beyond Limerick; the waters on the other, or northern side, flow into the sea at Ballysodare.

Numerous remains of primitive man are to be found in various parts of the barony. At Castleton, *i.e.*, Castle of Pride,<sup>1</sup> near the village of Ballintogher, is an excellent example of the old cashel or stone fort; near it are several raths. A short distance from Heapstown is the large cairn already mentioned. Not far from it, close to Highwood, are the monuments of the slain at the battle of North Moytirra.

There are remains of old churches in Killerry, Ballysummaghan, Ballynakill, Killadoon, Kilross, and Drumcolumb. In the graveyard attached to this last, there is a stone cross. Near

<sup>1</sup> Joyce, 2nd Series, pp. 441-2.



Riverstown is the old Church of Ardagh, or Kilmacallan. In the churchyard of Kilmastranny are the ruins of an old building, with a vault underneath; outside on a boulder stands a stone cross, with an inscription in raised letter.<sup>1</sup> Near Foyoges is another old graveyard and ruins. Near Ballindoon are the remains of an abbey of much later date than the old parish churches. Many other churches and monasteries existed in former times, but few of the sites can now be identified.

The barony was studded with fortalices, which seem to have changed masters with great rapidity. The remains of Castledargan, Drumcondra, Behy, Ballindoon, &c., still stand. Old-castle-house is built on the site of Ballintogher Castle. The remains of a fortified house may still be seen at Castlebaldwin; from the style of the chimneys and gables, it was evidently one of the settlement. The village of Belladrihid, on the banks of the little stream which separates Tirerrill from Carbury, is rich in historical association; a castle stood near it, its turrets peeping over the tree-tops of the woods which then covered the surrounding country.

To the extreme south, in the Curlew range, not far from the old Mail Coach road, is the Pass of Ballaghboy, so famous in days of old. It still preserves its desolate character, but the woods have disappeared for centuries. This pass was called *Bealach buidhe na Corrsliabh na Seghais*, i.e., the Yellow Pass of the Curlew and Seghais Range; and the old route from Boyle to Ballinafad is still familiarly called the Ballaghboy Road. The name Seghais is not now remembered. The Curlew hills have different names; one is called *Gearan*; *Breisleack*, in Roscommon; *Curnamiolta* and *Gearanban*, on the road from Boyle to Ballymote. On the latter there is a cairn—the only summit, therefore, which could by any possibility be called *Carn-Corrsliabh*.<sup>2</sup>

In the Survey of 1633-6, numerous townlands are mentioned as well-wooded.

In the parish of Dronyan, or Dromdony—Ardlymore, Srana-

<sup>1</sup> The writer has mislaid the rubbing, but as far as his memory serves, it was modern, A.D. 1686.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.

neagh, Caroweatera, Carowoghteragh, and Knocknagee. In the parish of Kilross—Cloragh, Tomerany, Lishboy. In the parish of Ballynakill—Corledangene, Cormacmurtaghfin, Carrowna-goillta, and Mulloghmore. In the parish of Kilmacallan—Dromleaghin and Umgeallagh. In the parish of Drumcolumb—Knockbrinegher. In the parish of Aghanagh—Carrowskardane, Carrownafureragh, Carrowknockbegart, Ballinmullany, Corduhy, Kilemuine, Castleallin, Kollseherry, Killeagh, and Balliely (Hollybrook). In the parish of Killadoon—Leahardan, Tullagh, Knockancapul, and Knocklagha. In the parish of Shancough—Carrowkessog, Carrowmore, and Carroicloonane. In the parish of Kilmastranny—Darribronagh, Killerigh, Drommore, Cloghearrog, Tullagh, Corgagh, Cloghenmagh, Trinog, Trinnamadue, Drombeg, Ballinasihe, Killkerey, Dorlea, and Enresina. In the “half-parish of Ennagh”—Carrowmeer. In the parish of Killy—Killerrie, Tubernany, Drommore, Casheloer, Tirtooicke, Altbellada, Raghian, Dromconie, Correy, Kiltcranen, Carrownadallar, Dromcalry, and Carrownagh.<sup>1</sup>

### *Barony of Coolavin.*

Between the barony of Corran on the north, the counties of Mayo on the west, and Roscommon on the east and south, lies the little barony of Coolavin. Its area is 29,157 acres, of which 3,707 acres are covered by water. In the “Ogygia” it is stated that “from Aengus Fionn, son of Fergus, are descended the inhabitants of Gregia, at this day Coolavin, a half-barony of the County of Sligo, near Lough Techet.”

This Finn, or Cufinn, from whom *Cuil-o-bh-Finn*, the angle district of the O’Finns, derived its name, was a son of Fergus, not by Meave, his celebrated queen, but by another wife. Finn’s descendants were first designated Dal-Cufinn, the prefix *dal*, signifying a tribe. Afterwards, in the eleventh century, the age of patronymics, they assumed the family name of O’Finn, from their celebrated ancestor.

Coolavin comprises the parishes of Kilfree,<sup>2</sup> Killaraght,<sup>3</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> The ancient orthography is retained.

<sup>2</sup> Kilfree, the Church of the Heath.

<sup>3</sup> Killaraght, St. Araght’s Church. St. Araght was formerly a most popular saint, and her memory is preserved in many a picturesque

part of Kilcolman.<sup>1</sup> It is divided into two unequal parts by Lough Gara. The tract lying to the south-east of the lake is locally known as "The Half-Parish." The northern portion of this barony is uneven and hilly, rising towards Corran into the Curlew Mountains. A little to the south the low mountain of Mullaghatee stretches towards Ballaghederreen in a chain of hills, the southern slopes of which are thickly strewn with rough stones and boulders; yet at one time these slopes were well wooded. The Distribution Book of the Down Survey, in which several forests are enumerated, notes in Coolavin the "tall thick woods of Capponagh," now the townland of Cuppanagh, in the parish of Killaraght. Amongst boulders and rocks the remains of natural wood may still be traced in the growth of holly, blackthorn, and seedling oak, which can also be seen on some of the slopes of Mullaghatee. The Distribution Book of the Down Survey, even at the comparatively modern date of 1655, mentions great woods at Lumcloune,<sup>2</sup> Doneenneiroine,<sup>3</sup> Castleline, and Keg, "the wood of Calliagh and some other woods adjoining."

In the survey of 1636 the following townlands are mentioned as well wooded: Gilfroy, Lavalleydunkillefry, were "all wood mounteyne;" Carowntona was "all timber wood;" Annaghmore was "all tymber wood;" the townlands<sup>4</sup> Annoghmore,

legend. It is said she built her nunnery where seven roads met, so that she might have a wide field in which to exercise hospitality. This was situated near Lough Gara, but in Leyny, of which district tradition says she was a native. On one occasion, says a legend, her countrymen flying before their enemies, she opened, like Moses of old, a dry passage for them through Lough Gara. When the King of Connaught had imposed an oppressive tax on the inhabitants of Leyny, Araght remonstrated with the monarch, but he hardened his heart and refused her petition; yet her prayers to heaven to deliver her fellow-countrymen from misery were heard, and deer came out of the forest bearing the tribute which had been demanded from the men of Leyny. According to Dr. Lanigan, she flourished some time in the sixth century.

<sup>1</sup> Kilcolman, the Church of St. Colman. Colman was a favourite name among the Irish saints; O'Clery's Calender alone, commemorates upwards of fifty of the name.

<sup>2</sup> Now Lomeloon, *bare meadow*, a townland in the parish of Killaraght.

<sup>3</sup> Probably the townland in the parish of Kilfree, now called simply "Doon."

<sup>4</sup> The ancient orthography is retained.



Clonsolagh, Lavalleinclogher, Carownaserue, Carownavallinow, Levallahaun-ano-mucklagh, Levallispallan, Tandan, Soyfin, Cloncagh, Manestedon, Drommackon, Carrowmkillscorney, Cluntecarne, Carrowreagh, Lisballile, Caltnan, Levallegortigara, and Collemore are similarly described.

The hills are principally of the same formation as the Curlews—old red sandstone, with mica-schist appearing near the summits. The soil of the barony is mostly poor and barren, especially on the hill slopes, but the southern portion affords a marked contrast. There, gently rising hills, which lie chiefly on limestone gravel, give excellent pasture land, equalled only by the neighbouring “Plains of Boyle.” In this barony the river Owenmore takes its rise, near a well called Tobernaneagh, in the townland of Kilfree. There are also several smaller streams.

The primitive remains in the barony are of little note. There is a large cashel near Clogher, and a cromlech in Kilfree. In the latter parish, near Mount Irwin, is the Friary of Knockmore, founded by the O’Garas in the fourteenth century; in the townland of Carrowntemple, an old church and graveyard; in the parish of Killaraght, in the townland of Anagh, near the shore of the lake, are the ruins of an old church and graveyard; in the southern portion of the parish is the graveyard of Killaraght, but no vestige of the ancient religious edifice remains.

On the northern slope of Mullaghatee, on a plateau which gently declines towards the lake, stands the Castle of Moygara, one of the very best examples in the County of Sligo of an ancient castellated building. It is rectangular in shape, the curtain walls enclosing a large bawn. On the west side was the dwelling, and there stood the entrance, in which grooves for the portcullis still remain. Over it there is a good example of the *sheelanagigg*, the popular name for curious pieces of ancient sculpture frequently found inserted in the walls of early buildings.<sup>1</sup> At each of the four angles of the castle were flanking

<sup>1</sup> The *sheelanagigg* is a well-known class of very extraordinary sculpture found in Ireland, “not only sometimes in the walls of churches, but in one or two instances, as hitherto noticed, upon otherwise exquisitely designed baptismal fonts of a period which archæologists would style ‘late decorated.’ A striking example occurs upon a font

towers, square in form. This castle belonged to the O'Garas, lords of the surrounding country, till the close of the seventeenth century, to one of whom, Fergal O'Gara, the county is indebted for that great work, the "Annals of the Four Masters."

### *Barony of Corran.*

The barony of Corran, the *Corana* of ancient writers, adjoins the counties of Mayo and Roscommon. Its boundaries in Sligo are the barony of Leyny, the barony of Coolavin, and the barony of Tirerrill. Its extent is 45,628 acres, of which 639 acres are water. It is in the diocese of Achonry, and is divided into the parishes of Cloonoghil, Drumrat Emlaghfad, Kilmorgan, Kishalvy, Toomour, and part of Kilturra.

In the *Dinnsenchus* the district of Corran is stated to have derived its name from *Coran*, a celebrated harper of the Tuatha de Danans, who received the territory in recompense for his musical talents. The country-people derive the name Corran from *Cor*, a winding or crooked rivulet, situated in the parish of Drumrat.<sup>1</sup> Corran formerly extended over a very large portion of the present County of Sligo, comprising not merely the present barony of that name, but also the barony of Leyny in Sligo, and that of Gallan in Mayo.

The surface of the district is much broken; in the eastern part of the barony hills rise to a considerable height, and form an elevated plateau, on which, not far from Newpark, in the Deer Park, are the remains of a fine cashel. A little to the

taken from the ruins of the old Church of Kilcarn, near Navan, County Meath, and now preserved in the neighbouring Roman Catholic Church of that parish. They may be seen upon old castles, as on the barbican of O'Gara's fortress, near Lough Gara, in the County of Sligo, or even upon town gateways, as at Athlone. Some examples are certainly not older than the sixteenth century. What was their meaning, and why were they so variously placed, seems to be a problem which has yet to be solved. Of one fact concerning them it may be distinctly stated, that from their style of art, and from the architectural character of the buildings with which they are respectively found, it would be impossible to assign the apparently oldest of them to an age beyond the mediæval."—*Journal of the Royal Historical and Archæological Association of Ireland*, Vol. V., p. 282. *Essay by W. F. Wakeman.*

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

south is the hill of *Kesh Corran*, i.e., Corran's harp, a limestone mass 1,183 feet in height, rendered remarkable by its caves,<sup>1</sup> sixteen in number, some of them of considerable size. In the townland of Carnaweeleen, on the slopes of the mountain, are two additional caves; the most westerly, called "school cave," derives its name, according to local tradition, from a hedge school-master who, more than two centuries ago, was in the habit of taking his scholars there in the summer time. The second cave is, perhaps, more appropriately designated "thieves' hole."

A very peculiar deep cleft traverses this isolated limestone-hill at its eastern extremity. In the present day it is difficult to account for the chasm, except on the supposition that it once formed the channel of a river, when the relative levels of the surrounding district may have been different.

The name *Kesh* may have been given to the mountain from its shape somewhat resembling a harp. *Ceis*, pronounced *Kesh*, is explained in *Lebar-na-h-Uidhre* as "a small harp which accompanied a large one." In the *Annals of Lough Key* the historian, lamenting the death of a MacDermot in 1568, describes the country as thereby made desolate like "a harp without a *Ceis*, and a Church without an abbot."

Near this mountain was born Cormac Mac Art, the celebrated King of Ireland. The mother of Cormac had been warned by a Druid that if her child were born under a certain planet, and at a certain hour, some great misfortune would assuredly befall him. One day, her husband and his retainers being all absent at the chase, she suddenly remembered that there was no water wherewith to prepare the spoils of the hunters on their return, and she therefore proceeded to the townland of Cross to draw water from a well since called *Tobercormac*. She walked leisurely, but had scarce reached half way to the well when, at the disastrous hour foretold, she was seized with the pains of labour, and gave birth to her infant. Immediately after this event the mother had sufficient forethought to cut from the little toe of the infant's right foot a small piece of flesh, as a private mark whereby to recognise her child in the event of any accident. Whilst she was in a weak and fainting condition, the child was taken from her arms by a weird-wolf, and carried off to a cave,

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A, 'Caves of Sligo,' by E. T. Hardman, H.M.G.S.



in the townland of Cloonagh where, like a second Romulus, he was suckled by the wolf till about twelve months' old, at which time he was observed essaying to walk by placing his hands on the wolf's back for support. The father of Cormac's mother, O'Dolain, a chief of Corran, with whom she then lived, on Lough Feenagh, caused some flesh to be roasted near the cave, when the wolves, attracted by the appetising scent, rushed to the spot, leaving the infant behind. By this artifice O'Dolain was enabled to recover the boy, and his daughter at once recognised him as her lost son on observing the mark left by removal of the piece of flesh from the little toe.

At the time that Cormac had grown to manhood, the head chief of the district, a great tyrant, called Mac Con, kept men to guard and watch over him during the night. These guards were constantly found dead in the morning. At length it fell to the lot of Cormac to keep watch over his chief. Aware that Mac Con was the reputed offspring of a water-sprite, and, consequently, unable to close both eyes at night unless near water, Cormac, on pretence of washing his hands, called for a basin of water, which he placed surreptitiously under the tyrant's bed, so that he slept soundly through the night. By this means Cormac was enabled to observe a vast multitude of water-sprites who, being of like nature as Mac Con, were in the habit of paying him nocturnal visits, and on these occasions, assisted as supposed by Mac Con himself, frequently killed the night guards. Cormac, however, succeeded in slaying all the sprites, and on the following morning he recounted the occurrence to Mac Con, declaring that he was but "half human." Mac Con, up to that period ignorant of his real origin, was on the point of putting Cormac to death, but on his mother acknowledging the truth, Mac Con abandoned his position as chief, retired to the borders of Lough Feenagh, and was never more heard of !

Mac Con, who had usurped the post of chief, was succeeded by Cormac, the rightful heir, and he afterwards became King of Tara.<sup>1</sup> So runs the legend.

Corran contains many prehistoric remains. There is a cairn on the hill of Doo, near Kilmorgan, and remains of mounds and

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

stone graves close to the old church. Near Ballymote and in its neighbourhood are raths containing chambers; also the curious mound, which appears to be sepulchral in character, of sugar-loaf form, and called in Irish, *Sidhean-a-Ghaire*, the fairy-mount of Ghaire. There are several good examples of duns, ramparted and moated, and beyond Roadstown, on Church-hill, is one of the largest cromlechs in the county.

Several examples exist of early churches and abbeys. In the parish of Cloonoghill, *i.e.*, *the meadow of the yew wood*, in the townland of Rinnarogue,<sup>1</sup> is an abbey and graveyard; also, in Ballynaglog, *i.e.*, *the townland of the stones*, as well as in the townland of Churchhill, anciently called Cloonoghill. In the parish of Drumrat, *the ridge of the rath*, is the old graveyard and church of Knochbrac, *speckled-hill*. In this parish St. Fechin, in the seventh century, founded an abbey, situated probably in the townland of Abbeyville, anciently Ardlaherty, but scarcely a trace of it remains. In a graveyard in the parish of Emlaghfad, *long marshy land*, are the remains of a monastery, founded by the MacDonoghs. There is an old church in the graveyard at Kilmorgan, picturesquely situated on a declivity overlooking a small stream.

In the parish of Toomour, tomb of the two deaf persons, is a graveyard and old church; the latter, from its workmanship, is evidently very ancient, and is reputed to have been built by Columbkille.<sup>2</sup> At Templevanny was a monastery, in the townland of Greenan, *sunny spot*, an old church, and in its immediate neighbourhood there is a monumental stone. There are also remains of an old church in the graveyard of Kilturra; and near Kilturra House, standing about two feet out of the ground, is a stone, bearing on it a curious incised cross and circle of very rude workmanship. In the townland of Carrowloughlin are the ruins of Ballyfahy Castle, and near Roadstown, on the banks of the river, are remains of a castle which stood near the road leading from Ballymote to Tobereurry and Achonry, probably for the purpose of defending the adjacent ford which still exists.

<sup>1</sup> Rinnarogue, the point of the rout, or defeat, *i.e.*, the scene of some prehistoric contest between contending tribes.

<sup>2</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

The only woods mentioned in the Survey of 1636 as being then in Corran were in the townlands of Drumrolla and Tawnaghmore, in the parish of Kilshalvey; Clonetanvalle, in the parish of Drumrat; and Levalleymoney, in the parish of Toomour.

### *Barony of Leyny.*

The barony of Leyny borders on the County of Mayo; its Sligo boundaries being the Ox-range, the Bay of Ballysodare, and the baronies of Corran and Tirerrill.

It derives its name from Luigh or Lewy, son of Cormac Gaileng who, having fled from Munster, settled in Connaught, where his posterity continued to inhabit this tract. The Dobhailen and the O'Doneaths afterwards owned the territory, until the O'Haras and MacDonoghs came into possession.<sup>1</sup>

Towards the northern part of Leyny, the tract of country between the pass leading from Coolany to the sea, and the western boundary of the barony was anciently known as Coillte Luighne, *i.e.*, the woods of Leyny.

Leyny covers an area of 121,685 acres, of which 1,062 acres are water. It is divided into the parishes of Achonry, Kilmacteige, Kilvarnet, Killoran, and part of Ballysodare. Achonry contains nearly 61,000 acres, or more than half the barony. It is the largest parish in the county.

Much of the barony is mountain. There are also large tracts of bog, especially in the neighbourhood of Tobercurry, Curry, Bellahy, and the parish of Kilmacteige.

There is excellent pasture and arable land in the eastern portion of the barony; but in the parish of Kilmacteige the soil is generally poor. Leyny is divided from Tireragh by the Ox mountains, their summits rising at one point 1,632 feet above the sea-level. There are three passes between the baronies. One of these, known as "the gap," forms the communication between Tobercurry and Ballina. The road through this defile skirts the base of Gleneask mountain on the northern shore of the lake, which lies in a depression near the summit of the pass. On the southern shore rise frowning heights, reflected in

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*



the dark waters of Lough Talt (*i.e.*, the high lake), situated amidst mountains rugged and nearly perpendicular, presenting a most romantic and picturesque appearance, especially in the summer time.

Here may be seen many goats, sheep, and calves browsing on the verge of the rocky precipices, and seemingly, in perpetual danger of falling headlong into the lake which washes their base. The inaccessible cliffs near the summit afford safe retreat to the eagle which nestles there every year, yet, apparently without increasing its kind, as never more than one pair is observed to build at the same time. Their daily fare might excite the envy of a city alderman, hares, rabbits, and various species of game abounding in their ample domain. The lake, nearly 500 feet above the level of the sea, is more than a mile in length, and about half a mile in breadth. It is well stocked with trout of small size. An angler, provided with a boat, may have a good day's sport from its waters. These trout are said to vary both in shape and flavour in different parts of the lake.

In the townland of Castlecarragh, now Castlerock, and overlooking the road, are some vestiges of the fortress of Castlecarragh,<sup>1</sup> erected in days of rapine to guard this important pass. Near the ruins can still be seen an ancient monument or cromlech, called Dermot and Grainné's Bed. The western boundary of the parish of Kilmacteige is but a continuation of the Ox range, and through it a road runs from the village of Aclare to the yellow river, at the county boundary. In the depression in which this river flows, stratified sands and gravel form terraces and ridges along the sides of the valley, strewn with large boulders of local or foreign rocks. In other places, however, these blocks are embedded in reddish clay, resting on very coarse gravel, and resembling upper boulder clay.<sup>2</sup>

A remarkable chain of Eskers<sup>3</sup> runs from the neighbourhood of Tobercurry in a westerly direction to the river Enagh, near Aclare.

<sup>1</sup> By the Survey of 1636 it appears that even then, the castle was in a state of dilapidation.

<sup>2</sup> Hull's "Physical Geology of Ireland," p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> According to Joyce, Esker, Irish *Eiscir*, means a ridge of high land, but it is generally applied to a sandy or gravelly ridge, or a line of low hills.

Iron ore was formerly found and smelted in Stoneparks, near the village of Aclare, until the woods in the vicinity, which had supplied fuel, became exhausted; and near Ballysodare and Lugawarry lead mines were worked, for there had been in this latter district considerable woods, as its name, *Coillte Luighne*, demonstrates. On Petty's Map of 1683, forests are shown at Sheshugarry, Sheshucomon, Mullane, and Leitrim. The three first named are townlands lying along the southern slopes of the Ox mountains, between the little village of Cloonacool and the Owenaher river; and the last is a high hill, near Chaffpool. In the survey of 1636 the following townlands are mentioned as well wooded. In the parish of Achonry, the townlands of Carownalacollu, Carownoleck, Killcuryn, Clunvickcula, Mollan, Tullavelle, Sessowicomon, Sessowgarrih, Sessuaclaraij, and Leitrim; in the parish of Kilmacteige—Clungunagh and Culricoil; in the parish of Kilvarnet—Finlogh and Carowleght; in the parish of Ballysodare—Corownekevagh, Knockiara, Tullaghan, Lisduff, and Levallicoilteloge; this latter townland is described as "all woode and mounteine, and it lies close by the Strande of Trayoell." In the parish of Killoran—Carowneskehe, Carownebang, and Cappagh were "all wood."

Not far from Chaffpool, in the plain of Leyny, rise Knocknashee, *the hill of the fairies*, and Muckelty, *the haunt of swine*. These hills form very remarkable features in the landscape as seen from the southern parts of the county.

The principal lakes are—Lough Talt and Lough Easky on the borders of Leyny and Tireragh, and the lake of Templehouse on the borders of Leyny and Corran. There are also numerous small mountain tarns.

The principal rivers are—1st, the Owenmore, which rises in the barony of Coolavin, flows through Templehouse Lake to Collooney, and falls into the sea at Ballysodare. This river does frequent injury by flooding the low-lying land along its course. At Collooney and Ballysodare it precipitates its water over ledges of rock, and forms picturesque cascades, affording considerable water-power. There is now a valuable salmon fishery at its mouth, created within the last half century by the erection of ladders at the falls of Ballysodare and Collooney, by which

means the fish are enabled to ascend the river to the spawning grounds.

2nd. The Owenboy, *yellow river*, descends from the mountains above Coolany, and unites its waters to those of the Owenmore, near Annaghmore. 3rd. The Moy takes its rise in the Ox range (some assert its source to be at the foot of Knocknashee), and winds in a south-westerly course through the barony. Numerous torrents from the Ox mountains flow into it, as also, the surplus waters of Lough Talt, the Bellanamean river, together with other small streams from the mountains of Kilmacteige.

There are several traces of primitive man in the barony, of which perhaps not the least interesting is a hill rising over the mouth of the Ballysodare river on its western side, and known by the name of Knockmuldoney, *i.e.*, the hill of the whirlpool of the Domnians, said to have been a tribe of the Firbolgs. At its base the river forms a deep pool, with a slight eddy caused by the waterfall above. In this pool vessels to this day lie, as did probably the ships of the Firbolgs two thousand years ago. On the strand, near the Church of Beltra, *the entrance to the strand*, stood the cairn of Eochy, already mentioned, which, by an inexcusable act of vandalism, was pulled down some years ago. The popular tradition relating to this strand is, that a woman named Helé, some say Helen of Greece, set out in search of her own people, the Fians, who had gone on an expedition to a foreign country. When crossing the sands she met a man, from whom she made enquiries about her people. He answered, "They are above, lying under the trees," pointing to Coillte Luighne, *the woods of Leyny*. On receiving this reply, she said, "Alas, I can follow them no farther. I now lay aside all hope of ever meeting them again. Were they my people, each of them, if lying down, would reach from the trees to where I stand," and in her despair she dropped down dead. Two cairns were raised over her on the strand, opposite Coillte Luighne. The large cairn rested over her head, and was called *Carraigín O-hele*; the other, resting over her feet, was called *Carraigín-beg*.

Another legend recounts that a combat took place between two heroes on the strand, of whom Goll was one; that Helé, looked on, and seeing her loved one fall, she dropped dead



through excess of grief; and over her one cairn was erected, the other over her luckless lover.<sup>1</sup> This is evidently the last lingering tradition of the final struggle of Southern Moytirra.

The early ecclesiastical remains are very interesting. Near Ballysodare stand the remains of the old church built by St. Fechin; and near it, in Abbeytown, the ruins of an abbey of later date. Further on are the traces of Tempul Kildalough, a building of very early date. At Kilvarnet, *Church of the Gap*, stands the old parish church founded by the O'Haras, and not far distant is the church and graveyard of the parish of Killoran, *Oran's Church*. In this parish, the townland of Gortakeeran contains a giant's grave. There is a cairn at Rathbarrow, also in Knockadoo, and a cromlech in Knockatotaun. Achonry, *Conarysfield*, gives name to a diocese; the ancient abbey was founded by St. Finian about the year 530. In the churchyard may still be seen part of the east gable of the old cathedral, and outside, at no great distance, are the remains of a building of much older date. Not many years ago, when the farm-house of Achonry was undergoing repairs, some Spanish coins of the date of the Armada were discovered hid in it. At Ballyglass, not far from the Moy, are the ruins of another ancient church. At the foot of Knocknashee, in the townland of Lavagh, *the place of the elms*, stands the Abbey of Court, founded by the O'Haras for Franciscan Friars of the Third Order. It is a fine specimen of the style of architecture, the lofty central tower rising on arches beautifully moulded and groined. Part of the transept also remains, and in the graveyard may be found the stones belonging to the mouldings of the windows; many coigns of the tower and walls have been torn out and removed. By an inquisition, taken 29th Queen Elizabeth, this abbey was seized of a church, covered with thatch, a cemetery, dormitory, and two other houses, likewise thatched; all were in a state of ruin, and of no value. The abbey was also seized of two quarters of land near the monastery, one called Carran-ardawer, and the other Carran-in-tawney, containing eighty acres of arable pasture, &c., part of the possessions of this abbey; annual value, £1 6s. 8d. sterling. At the period this inquisition was taken,

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

the lands were in possession of Roger Ballagh O'Hara, a priest. The remains of the Abbey of Banada, founded in the fifteenth century, are situated in the parish of Kilmacteige; the style of architecture is similar to that of Court; the central tower is still in good preservation; the stone spouts for carrying the rain from its roof still remain.<sup>1</sup>

In the parish of Achonry, townland of Sessuegarra, there is a burial-ground; in Kilcummin are the ruins of an abbey, a friary, and a graveyard; in the townland of Rathscanlon, a giant's grave; in Montiagh, a graveyard, and the church and burying-place of Castleara.

To the west of the village of Aclare are the ruins of Belclare Castle, anciently written *Bel-an-chlair*, the entrance to the plain of Leyny. The ruins of a castle may be seen near the junction of the rivers Unchin and Owenmore, and another in the townland of Moymlough, *erupted lake*. In the demesne of Templehouse are the ruins of another castle, called *Teach Tempul*. Near Tobercurry are traces of Castleloye, designated *Caiseal Luaidh* by the country-people.<sup>2</sup> Beyond the village stands Ballyara, belonging to the O'Haras; and further on, and on the banks of a rivulet, near its junction with the Moy, was another stronghold.

Leyny has been the scene of many remarkable events from the death of Eochy, after the battle of Moytirra Cong, down to comparatively recent times. Ballysodare, originally called *Eas-dara* (the cataract of the oak), has been the battle-field of many opposing tribes, being frequently sacked and burnt. Colloony,

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1423, Charles O'Hara founded a convent of the Order of the Eremites of St. Augustine at *Beann Fhoda*, "long mountain," now Banada. The founder was of the race of the Lords of Leyny. Not far distant rose a castle belonging to that family, as protection against marauders, whilst under the walls nestled a scant population, dwelling in huts. The abbey was destined to become a flourishing establishment. In 1439, Dun Donough O'Hara resigned his lordship in favour of his brother, and withdrew into the seclusion of the monastery. Later on, in the same century, some of the same race met a bloody death within its walls. In 1488, "John Oge O'Hara and his son were treacherously slain on a Sunday in the monastery of Banada, by their own kinsmen, Rory and Hugh" (O'Hara).

<sup>2</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

like Ballysodare, stands on the banks of the Owenmore, and was anciently called Cuil-maile, and sometimes Killenbridge, by the English. According to popular tradition, the village took its name from Una, pronounced *Oona*, a daughter of the MacDonogh, Lord of Tirerrill. Similarly, another village, called Coolany, to the west of Colloony, took its name from Ainé, another daughter of MacDonough. Tradition says that a portion of land, on the site of each of these villages, was given as dowry by MacDonogh to his two daughters; that Una resided in Colloony, and Ainé in Coolany, and hence the names.<sup>1</sup>

Other villages in the barony are Tobercurry, Curry, Aclare, and Bellahy. These present no features of note, nor any objects of interest. Tobercurry is written by MacFirbis *Tober-an-choire*, the well of the cauldron, or the cauldron-shaped well; but local tradition says the name was derived from a *boná fide* cauldron or sacred vessel, kept in the village, constantly supplied from the sacred waters of the spring, and which was used by the Druids for sacrificial purposes. Near the village is a good example of a giant's grave. Curry signifies a swamp; Aclare, level field; and Bellahy, the entrance to the slough.

### *Barony of Tireragh.*

The barony of Tireragh, which lies along the north-western coast of the county, takes its name from Fiachra Ealgach, great grandson of Eochy Moyvane, King of Ireland, from A.D. 358-365. The present barony formed but a small portion of the territory of the Hy-Fiachrach, which extended from the river Robe, in Mayo, to the Cownagh, or River of Drumcliff, in Sligo, comprising Tyrawley in Mayo, also part of Carbury in Sligo. The word *Muaidh* or Moy was often attached to the designation, Tir Fiachrach, in order to describe the present barony of Tireragh. The popular interpretation of Tireragh is "Western Country." There is a common saying among the people, *Tir-iarach*, *Tir-fada-riabhach*, from its being a long, narrow, sombre-coloured tract.<sup>1</sup> It stretches from Ballysodare Bay to the town of Ballina, on the Moy, in Mayo; its rock-bound coast faces the Atlantic on the one side, whilst on the other is the Ox-range, which rises between this barony and Leyny.

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*



It is divided into the parishes of Castleconor, Dromard, Easky, Kilmacshalgan, Kilglass, Skreen, Templeboy, and part of Kilmoremoy, in all 106,802 acres. The Ox mountains should properly be called Stormy Mountains, "Slieve Ghamh," evidently a most appropriate designation, but the name has been corrupted into Ox mountains, "Slieve Dhamh." The people of the locality relate the following wild legend to account for the derivation of the name:—

On these mountains was an ox of monstrous size and of great age. This ox was killed by Cuaich, a hero of Tireragh, in a battle which took place on the mountains, and in which battle Flann was slain by Fir-na-h-inse. Rahan, the owner of this ox, on finding him killed, became outrageous; and Cuaich, in order to escape the vengeful hands of the enraged proprietor, concealed himself in one of the animal's horns! By this means he secured his safety; but shortly afterwards Cuaich went to a country forge with his sword, which the smith agreed to sharpen on condition that he should tell the mode in which Flann was killed by Fir-na-h-inse. When Cuaich had reached as far in his story as where he had concealed himself in the ox's horn to escape from the violence of Rahan, he was interrupted by a man, concealed behind the smith's bellows, who exclaimed that if he had been present he would not call him Cuaich *chonnacht*, but Cuaich *na-hadhairce*, because he was concealed in the horn. The narration ceases at this point, so that the manner in which Flann fell by the hands of Fir-na-h-inse must still remain buried in oblivion. From the gigantic ox mentioned in the fable, Slieve Damh, the ox mountain is said to have taken its designation. The Dinnsenchus states that the mountain derived its name from Gamh "of the bright cheek," the servant of Eremon, who was there slain by the Amadii, who cut off his head and threw it into a well, which thereafter became enchanted, producing at one period of the day pure spring water, whilst at another period it became bitter and salt.<sup>1</sup>

Of all the enchanted wells of Sligo, this well of Tubber Tulaghan, near the summit of a lofty rock or hill bearing the same name, is the most noteworthy. It was one of the *Mirabilia*

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

*Hiberniæ*, or wonders of Ireland, described by Nennius, Giraldus Cambrensis, O'Flaherty, and by a host of other writers on Irish topography. The well still exists, and measures two feet in diameter by about eighteen inches in depth. It is enclosed within a roofless circular building of dry stonework, about four feet in height and having an opening, which may have been a doorway, facing the east. The water is neither clear nor tempting; it is full of minute weeds, and covered with an oil-like scum, but this might be the case with any long-neglected enclosed spring. The flavour is slightly brackish, and the people living near the spot assert that the water often suddenly rises and falls, a circumstance not uncommon in limestone springs. The whole place presented a wofully desolate look; and but for the cairn immediately adjoining, and the presence of a pillar-stone, called an altar, placed a little to the left of the well-building, it is difficult to imagine that it had ever been of importance. Pilgrimages, or pious visits, to Tubber Tullaghan, though for ages very common, have long ceased, chiefly through the exertions of the Roman Catholic clergy; yet it is traditionally recounted, that in times not very remote many miraculous cures were experienced by the faithful at the spring. The tradition connected with it is, that St. Patrick, when expelling the demons from the Rick, *i.e.*, Croagh Patrick, in Mayo, pursued one of them, called Caorthanach, who is reputed to have been the Devil's mother, and this demon polluted all the water in the wells which lay along the line of flight. On reaching Tullaghan, St. Patrick was seized with great thirst. He prayed to obtain a drink for himself, and on the side of the little hill sprang forth this fountain, which has been frequented by the faithful ever since.<sup>1</sup>

“A brace of trout, not always visible to ordinary eyes, but which trustworthy people still living declare that they themselves have seen, are said to have inhabited this pool. That, like the Tober Keeran and Cong fishes, the Tullaghan examples must have been ‘enchanted,’ is a fact established beyond the possibility of doubt, if we can believe current stories to the effect that they have been taken, cooked, and eaten, without apparent inconvenience to themselves, as they were soon afterwards observed

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*



in their accustomed spot, lively as ever, and as innocent-looking as any ordinary specimens of the red-rained tribe."<sup>1</sup>

The Ox range consists of alternating beds of granite, or gneiss, schist, and quartzite. "The granite is often largely crystalline and porphyritic. In this district we have examples of the results of metamorphic action in the production of varieties of crystalline rocks depending on the characters of the original strata. Thus, beds of foliated granite, schist, quartzite, and crystalline limestone are to be found succeeding each other in rotation, their characters, under their metamorphosed condition, depending in all probability upon their original composition, whether as sandstone, shale, grit, or limestone."<sup>2</sup> The summit of Knock-na-cree, the mountain of the heart, the highest point of the range, is 1,778 feet above the sea-level. "Erratics" abound in Tireragh, especially near Easky. One of these in particular, known as "the Split Rock," is so called from its being separated into two portions. There is a legend anent it as follows:—

THE SPLIT ROCK; OR, FINN MACCUMHAIL'S FINGER-STONE.

"Over the hills the giant strode,  
And he look'd on the distant 'Atlantic broad.'  
He stood on the mountain, he aim'd at the sea,  
And a rock from his right hand flew far o'er the lea.  
'Twas but a mere pebble, his light finger-stone,  
He wou'd into the boiling flood have thrown,  
To sink in the cauldron of foaming froth;  
But the stone fell short, and the giant's wrath  
Was kindled fierce; the rebel rock  
With his long and ponderous sword he struck,  
And the granite mass was cleft in twain,  
Which there from time unknown hath lain,  
With its wide yawning chasm on Easky's plain."<sup>3</sup>

This barony<sup>4</sup> is not so rich in antiquities as Carbury; but near Carrowhubbuck, is a subterranean chamber, with several smaller

<sup>1</sup> W. F. Wakeman, on certain wells situate in the north-west of Ireland, published in the Journal of the Royal Historical and Archæological Association of Ireland, Vol. V., p. 369, and kindly forwarded by Mr. Wakeman to the writer.

<sup>2</sup> Hull's "Physical Geology of Ireland," p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> "Lyrics," by Mrs. Godfrey.

<sup>4</sup> Lady Morgan thus describes Tireragh:—"The barony of Tireragh is



chambers off. It extends about thirty feet under ground. The sides are dry masonry, and large granite boulders form the roof. About twelve feet from the entrance is a spring of clear water, which never runs dry, yet never shows any sign of overflow, even in the wettest season. On the opposite side of the road are three grass-covered cairns. In the townland of Scurmore are some standing stones called *Children of the Mermaid*; in Muckduff, is the "Grave of the Black Pig;" in Grangebegg, parish of Templeboy, stands a cromlech; in the detached townland of Doonaltan, belonging to but separated from that parish by an intervening portion of Kilmaeshalgan, the supposed grave of St. Ernan, is still pointed out; in the townland of Belville is a monumental stone, called *Cloch-a-braca*, speckled stone; in Tawnatruffaun, not far from Tawnalaghta, is a monument called the "Giant's Griddle," in close proximity to a "Giant's Grave;" in Caltragh, *i.e.*, the burying-place, are two monuments,

a remote tract of land in the province of Connaught, skirting the most romantic shores of the western coast of Ireland, and sheltered by a continued chain of mountains, above which the 'cloud-cap'd' summits of Knock-na-cree and Nephin-noble are conspicuously distinguished. The old traditions of the country assert that the barony of Tireragh, as well as that of Tirawley, derived its name from Finn MacCumhail (or Fingal, the far-famed hero of Ossian's songs), as he stood on the summit of one of the Ox Mountains, where he was devoting some days to the pleasures of the chase. The road leading into the heart of the barony commands the Bay of Sligo, the distant heights of Benbo and Ben-Bulbin, the opposite shores, crowned with the majesty of Knock-na-rea, with a distant view of the town of Sligo, and the woods which skirt the adjacent lakes. Such are the picturesque views, caught and lost at intervals along the road that passes directly through the village of Ballysodare; an old hamlet lying on the banks of a river, which has its source in the mountains, and forms, in its rapid course over a steep and unequal bed, a beautiful succession of waterfalls, which wear the singular appearance of an aquatic amphitheatre; the rapid and repulsed stream, breaking over rocks from point to point, till it reaches the principal steep, which is upwards of fifty feet perpendicular. These romantic cataracts, when seen through the dark woods which once surrounded them, and with the full relief of Knock-na-rea in the rere, must have ranked amongst the noblest scenic features in the world." The scenery, though fine, does not equal this description, and Lady Morgan has qualified it in a subsequent edition in these words: "The author's *views* of the world, moral or physical, were then *rather* limited; she had not even crossed the 'Herring Pond,' much less dreamed of ever visiting 'the Alps and Apennines, and River Po.'"

designated Griddle-more na vean and Griddle-beg na vean, and in the demesne of Fortland are three cromlechs; in the castle-field at Inisheroane is a stone circle; near Tonrego there are several raths, two cromlechs, two gallauns, and what appears to be a pagan burying-ground.

The most remarkable ecclesiastical remains are Skreen and the Abbey of Ardnaree. In the latter is a handsome doorway facing the road.

There is a remarkable cross on the gable of the old chapel at Easky; but although there are several ruins of other churches, they do not present any special features of interest. It may be, however, as well to enumerate them briefly. In the townland of Corimla, parish of Kilmorenoy, is an ancient graveyard; in Killylanly, parish of Castleconor, the ruins of an old church; in Kilglass, the remains of the old parish church; in Killeenduff, a locality called the "Black Graveyard." The priory of Aughris stood in the present townland of Corcoran's Acres, in the parish of Templeboy. There is a burying-place in Cashelboy; and the site of the old church of Dromard concludes the list of ecclesiastical remains.

On the rugged, dangerous coast of Tireragh there is no protection for fishing-boats, but two piers, now in course of construction at Pullindiva, and at Inisheroane, will, in the future, serve as harbours of refuge for fishermen. There is a kind of natural harbour at Pollacheeny, formed by out-lying rocks, and vessels occasionally come in for kelp, but west and north-west winds render it insecure, and several ships have been there driven ashore and lost. There is a fine strand at Inisheroane, with high sandhills extending from the village to the river Moy, which divides the barony from the County of Mayo. Between Easky and Dromore West the coast is steep and precipitous, rising to a height of from 40 to 60 feet over the Atlantic. The headland of Aughris presents a magnificent spectacle in stormy weather, with the waves dashing over the cliffs; adjoining is the pretty sandy bay of Dunmorán, and at Ballysodare Bay the beach is mostly gravel or sand.

On a map of the barony,<sup>1</sup> *circum.* 1609, twenty-three castles

<sup>1</sup> The barony must have been denuded of woods at an early epoch, for in the Survey of 1636 only two forests are mentioned, namely, at "Glanscow" and "Killvickorkan," both in the parish of Kilmacshalgan.

were marked. Most of these have totally disappeared. Those in the best preservation are Castleconor, near Ballina, which commanded a ferry on the river Moy, Cottlestown, Inishcroane, Roslee, Grangemore, and Ardnaglass. There are slight remains of buildings at Cashelboy, Carrowmably, Ballynahowna, Dunneil, Bellanaboy, Rathlee, Tonrego, and Longford.

Duald Mac Firbis, writing *circum*. 1660, says, "It was the English that erected all the bawn of the Longphort (Longford) except *Leabha-an-Eich-Buidhe*, which was erected by Sen Brian O'Dowd," *i.e.*, between A.D., 1278-1354; *Leabha-an-Eich-Buidhe* would be anglicised Labanehwee, *i.e.*, *the bed of the Yellow Steed*, and was indubitably the name of some building adjoining the Castle of Longford. The tradition attached to the name lingers in a distorted form.

In "The Wild Irish Girl," Lady Morgan's first novel, and written by her at Longford House,<sup>1</sup> she thus alludes to the subject—"Of the old Castle of L—— little now remains but a few fragments to mark its site, strewn amidst the vegetation which covers a cave" (*i.e.*, the old castle dungeons), "the probable asylum of many an unhappy fugitive in days of civil horror or religious persecution. Near the spot where the castle once frowned, moulder the ruins of a small building, whose dilapidated portal still bears a Spanish inscription (?) intimating that it was the retreat" (*Leabha*) "of a priest and his yellow-haired companion."<sup>2</sup> It was erected, as tradition asserts, by one of

<sup>1</sup> "I reached its venerable avenue," writes Lady Morgan, "at a season peculiarly favourable to the *chiaro-oscuro* of picturesque beauty. With the old gloomy avenue of an ancient mansion-seat, there is, I think, invariably connected a certain sentiment which bears the heart back to other times, and awakens it to an emotion of tender reverence and melancholy pleasure. For myself, I have never walked beneath this dear old avenue unimpressed by a certain feeling, in which memory's pensive spell mingled with the speculations of awakened fancy."

<sup>2</sup>

IOHANNIS . HENRICI . VULPISQ . FLAVICOMÆ . BUEN . RETIRO . + E.C. ME. F.F.	HUGO FLANELY SCULPSIT 1724.
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The following is a probable reading: "The safe retreat of John Henry (Crofton) and his yellow-haired Fox. E(dward) C(rofton) caused this to



the *Irish* lords of the castle for his youngest son, who had in Elizabethan days forfeited the revenues of an abbey of which he was superior; but whether this forfeiture arose from his attachment to Popery, or to his yellow-haired companion, oral history has preserved no record." The "mouldering building," inhabited by the traditional priest, now serves as a garden-house. On it is a stone, bearing the Crofton Arms, Crest and Motto, very well cut, and evidently of a much later date. The inscription described by Lady Morgan as Spanish, is really bad Latin, but the distorted legend narrated, clearly demonstrates that some faint tradition of Labanehwee yet lingered. Lady Morgan goes on to say, "Near this retreat stands a small oratory, or cell, furnished with a ruined altar (now gone) and some curiously carved heads of saints. In the traditional history of the barony, Longford holds a distinguished place. The Castle, erected and long possessed by the O'Dowds, one of the most powerful families in Connaught, was besieged and taken by the Clan of the Mac Swines, whose descendant, in the reign of Elizabeth, made it over for a certain sum of money, with all the circumjacent lands, to Edward Crofton, an officer in Essex' Army, and afterwards Escheator-General of Ireland." It is still well known amongst the neighbouring peasantry that the lands of Longford had been obtained by purchase from the original proprietors.

The vault under the castle is now closed. It was really a long, narrow passage, flagged both over and under, and with dry built sides. A portion of it remained open to a recent period. There is a tradition that this underground passage led to a fort about 500 yards distant. Giollo Iosa More Mac Firbis thus alludes to the Castle of Longford, in the poem written by him in 1417, and dedicated to the grandson of Sen Brian O'Dowd, who erected the "Bed of the Yellow Steed"—

" Oft is carried from thy (O'Dowd's) palace,  
By troops of saints and poets,  
Cattle from the fort near Leamhach,  
By the friars of wooded Boyle."

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be erected." Probably his companion's name was Fox. The two Spanish words, "Buen retiro," are strangely mixed with the Latin, but this is not an exceptional case. "Hugh Flanely sculpsit 1724" seems of a much later date than the foregoing, Flanely probably only having renovated the lettering, which is in raised character.

Leamhach, now anglicised Lavagh, is the name of a townland in the parish of Dromard. O'Donovan asserts, there can be little doubt that the fort near Lavagh is the celebrated Castle of Longford, which was taken from its Anglo-Norman proprietors by the grandfather of the O'Dowd, to whom the poem of Mac Firbis is dedicated. The friars alluded to were the friars of the Abbey of Boyle, in the County of Roscommon, to whom O'Dowd appears to have been liberal in gifts, as also to the class represented by the author of the poem.

The chapel at Longford, only 17 feet by 5 feet, and situated about 25 yards from the site of the old castle, had been probably comprised within its enclosure. The chapel possesses no architectural feature of any importance. On the east wall are two figures, purporting to represent St. David and St. Paul. On the wall of the south end where, strange to say, the altar must have stood, is a rude crucifix, the centre more deeply cut than the other carvings, and flanked on the one side by St. Peter with the keys; on the other by a cross which, however, bears a date so late as 1730. On the north side is a virgin and child, with a Latin inscription. On the outside, over the door, is a curious crest or carving, representing apparently the rising sun.

At a distance of about 200 yards on the opposite side of the road is a seemingly ancient building, with round arched doorway of cut stone, and vaulted roof. Over the doorway are the Crofton arms and crest, much weather-worn. Per pale indented or and az. a lion pass. guard. counterchanged. *Crest*—A stalk of wheat (seven ears on one stalk). *Or. Motto*—"Dat Deus incrementum." To this curious old building tradition assigns no higher degree of importance than that of a forge.

Mac Firbis, in a smaller work, compiled by him in 1666, thus casually mentions Longford,—“I have heard that the grandfather of Captain Dominic (Barrett), who died 1443, obtained possession, and received the rents of Longphort Ui' Dhubhda (Longford O'Dowd) in Tireragh; but he was afterwards hanged by Donal O'Connor, at Belanclare, in Leyny, O'Hara Reagh's country.”

The O'Dowds were amongst the most powerful chiefs within the bounds of Sligo and Mayo; they possessed large districts in both counties. Fourteen of this race held rule in Connaught. Mention is made in the Annals of many valiant chiefs of the O'Dowds down to the 17th century, and they still retained

possessions in the barony of Tireragh, at the period of the Cromwellian wars. Mac Firbis<sup>1</sup> prefaces his account of the line of their chiefs with the following remarks—"Here follow some of the chieftains of the O'Dowds, with the title which historical books give them, namely, the title of king, and though strange this appears at this day, it was not so then among the Irish according to their laws at that time, and according to other nations also. Behold, before the coming of the children of Israel to the Land of Promise, how there were thirty kings together in that country, and it not more than two hundred miles in length, and fifty miles in breadth." The hereditary proprietors in the barony of Tireragh, according to a poem of Giolla Iosa More Mac Firbis, written after the Anglo-Norman settlement, are thus noted:—

1. *O'Caomhain*, a name now modernised Kavanagh, possessed under the O'Dowds the district stretching from Toomour, in Gallen, County of Mayo, to the *Gleoir*, the ancient name of the river Leaffony, in Sligo. O'Kavanagh's sub-chiefs and retainers in Sligo were as follows:—

(i.) O'Moran held Ardnaree.

(ii.) O'Brogan dwelt at *Breachmhaigh*, now Breaghwy, *i.e.*, Wolf-field, the name of a large townland in the Sligo portion of the parish of Kilmoremoy. In the Annals, under date 753, it is thus mentioned. "The battle of Dromrobach, which was called that of Breachmhaigh, was fought by the Hy Fiachrach, with the Hy Bruin."

(iii.) Mac-Cailleachain (Callaghan), of Carns, a townland in the south of the parish of Castleconor.

(iv.) O'Coitil (Cottle), of Cottlestown, in the parish of Castleconor. Here can be seen the ruins of a castle, erected by Domhnall Bhaile Ui Choitil O'Dowd, who became chief of his name 1447.

(v.) O'Floinn (O'Flynn), of Beartrach and Mucdhubh. The word *beartrach* is well understood on the coasts of Connaught, where it enters largely into topographical names to designate an oyster bank. O'Donovan considered the word to be compounded of *bior*, water, and *torrach*, fruitful. Bartragh is a sandy peninsula in the north-west of the parish of Castleconor,

<sup>1</sup> The following account of the chiefs of Tireragh is taken from the Genealogies, Tribes, and Customs of Hy Fiachrach, in the book of Laccan, &c., with a Translation and Notes by J. O'Donovan. Dublin, 1844.



near the mouth of the river Moy. Muedhubh (Muckduff), the black pig, is a townland in the north of the same parish. It contains the grave of "the black pig," a ubiquitous and remarkable animal, for it seems to have been chased, killed, and even buried at several distinct places.

(vi.) O'Mochanie (Mohan), of Ballymoghany, in the parish of Castleconor.

(vii.) O'h-Imhair, of Laccan, a townland in the parish of Kilglass. The tribe of the Mac Firbis, of the same race as the O'Dowds, first settled in Tirawley, County of Mayo, but afterwards took up their abode at Laccan. They held the office of Ollamhs, or hereditary historiographers and poets of the O'Dowds, at one time holding that distinguished post for the entire Province of Connaught. They are frequently mentioned in various Irish Annals. The Book of Laccan, there compiled by them from the 12th to the 15th centuries, is one of the greatest and most authentic records of local Irish History. In 1560, a long time after their original settlement, they erected the Castle of Laccan Mac Firbis. The castle, however, does not appear to have been a full century in the possession of the Mac Firbis, for in an inquisition taken at Sligo, on the 22nd August, 1625, it is there stated that Donogh O'Dowd was seized of the castle, town, and quarters of Laccan Mac Firbis. In 1641, it was forfeited by the then O'Dowd, and granted to Cornet Thomas Wood, of Coote's Regiment of Horse, and the portion of it that remained in the senior branch of the family, passed by marriage of the heiress into the family of Digby, who now possess it. The castle is a mere heap of sod-covered ruins, hardly discernible. Forbes is the anglicised form of Mac Firbis; the name of the original proprietor of Laccan, O'h-Imhair, is anglicised Ivers.

(viii.) O'Loingseachain, of Mullach-Ratha, *i.e.*, the hill of the rath. This territory seems evidently to be the townland of Rathlee, in the parish of Easky. The name of this chief is now obsolete, but in some parts of Ireland it would appear to have been anglicised Lynch.

(ix.) O'Spelan, of Culleens, in the parish of Kilglass. The poet laments that in his day this chief possessed only a half townland.

(x.) O'Fualairg, of Rath Bearchain. The names of both chief and territory are alike extinct.

(xi.) O'Breslan, of Killanly.

(xii.) O'Connaughtan, of Cabragh, a townland in the parish of Kilglass. The poet praises this chief for his success in growing hazel, thus, showing the value set upon the fruit of that tree by the ancient Irish.

From the foregoing it may be seen that O'Kavanagh had under him twelve petty chiefs. By a compact between O'Dowd and O'Kavanagh, the latter, for himself and his representatives, resigned all claim to the sovereignty of Tir-Fiachrach, receiving in exchange certain tracts of land, and various privileges, as compensation for the loss of the chieftainship.

Gerald, of Mayo, the Saxon Saint, with his three hundred monks, had pronounced a curse against the race of O'Kavanagh, in consequence of the conduct of the wife of Cathal, only son of Kavanagh, who had at a late hour in the evening turned the saint out of Kavanagh's fort of Cathair-more. The saint prayed, and while praying, foresaw that there should never be a king of the race of Kavanagh. On hearing this, Hugh O'Kavanagh, the legitimate son of Cathal, by his inhospitable wife, grieved for the curse pronounced against the race of his grandfather, visited the saint with a hope of inducing him to revoke the curse, but although the holy man listened to him, still he would not agree to revoke the denunciation as against Hugh, or any descendant of the wife of Cathal, but he consented to avert the evil effect of his malediction from Dermot O'Kavanagh, illegitimate son of Cathal, in whom flowed none of the blood of the woman who had insulted him. Saint Gerald wished that Dermot and his race should possess the chieftainship of the tribe of the O'Kavanaghs alone, but not that any of his descendants should aspire to be chief of the Hy-Fiachrach, which dignity became vested in the race of O'Dowd. The following compensations and privileges, however, were ceded to the race of Dermot O'Kavanagh, in token of the seniority of his family—viz., That their chief should possess a *tuath*, or large district in each territory, which belonged to the O'Dowd, within the region extending from the river Robe to the river Cowney or Drumcliff; that he should have the privilege of first entering the bath, of first sitting down at the feast, and of taking the first drink; that he should be O'Dowd's chief marshal and commander of his forces; that in his presence O'Dowd should stand up whenever they should meet; that all in O'Dowd's country, taking arms for the first time, should be invested by the hand of

O'Kavanagh's representative; that to O'Kavanagh should be paid the fine called *Luach leasa* (literally reward of welfare), from every chief's daughter on her marriage; that the appointment of the O'Dowd should always be made in the presence and with the consent of O'Kavanagh, who should first pronounce his name, and walk thrice round him after his nomination; that after O'Dowd's inauguration, O'Kavanagh should receive his steed and battle dress, and that to Mac Firbis, poet of the principality, should be given the like, by O'Kavanagh. At one time, despite the agreement made between O'Dowd and O'Kavanagh, the O'Dowds wrested their territory from the O'Kavanaghs, and retained possession until Nial O'Dowd was slain by the dispossessed sept, upon which they seem to have regained all their former possessions, and to have acquired also, *Sais-Sgrebhainn*, *Saighin-Uisge-tae-abhainn*, *Inis-Sgreabhainn* and *Eiscir-abhann*, thus variously written, and now anglicised Inishcroane, whose beauties are thus sung by the poet Giolla Iose More Mac Firbis—

“ Oh ! Inishcroane, of sparkling streams,  
Thy flowery mead with verdure teems,  
Thy hazel brakes with fruit droop down,<sup>1</sup>  
Thy portals high on foeman frown,  
Behold O'Kav'nagh's sword-won home.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Our author, Mac Firbis, says that in the time of his Lord, Teige O'Dowd—

“ The kernels of the fragrant hazel nuts,  
Not larger were the apples of the apple tree.”

Throughout the poem great numbers of the small farmers, or petty chiefs, are lavishly praised for the great care with which they cultivated the hazel. In the best and most ancient Irish MSS., the word *aball*, which is evidently cognate with the English word *apple*, is used to denote the apple tree; and *áball* its fruit, a distinction not at all observed in the modern language. The value set by the ancient Irish upon the hazel nuts is here proved beyond a question; but nothing is said in any part of the poem to show *why* they were so valuable. We know that they had large herds of swine which fed on masts in the woods, but it is more probable that the people used the hazel nuts as an article of food.—O'Donovan's notes to “Hy-Fiachrach.”

<sup>2</sup> “ Fuaran O'Caemán na colg n-ġlar,  
Sair Sgnebainn na rreb folar,  
Fonn bláit taeab-folar mar taimo,  
Páit na n-ael-roopur n-álainn,  
'na poirt connairi o'á éloinn,  
Soirt ar éoll-buoir éanum.”

—Seineáíach ua bh-Fiachrach, 255.



The O'Kavanaghs sank into insignificance in the fourteenth century, and although they seem to have retained their little principality to the beginning of the fifteenth century, very few notices of them have been preserved by the Irish Annalists. In 1209, Dermot O'Kavanagh, chief of the territory from Toomour to the river Gleoir, died. In 1294, mention is made of a Dermot O'Kavanagh; and in 1306, the death of David O'Kavanagh is noticed.

2. Adjoining the Sligo portion of O'Kavanagh's territory was that of O'Muldoon, chief of the district lying between the Leaffony and the Easky rivers. His sub-chiefs were—

(i.) O'Ruadhrach, of Lia-Con. There is no locality in Tire-ragh at present bearing that name.

(ii.) O'Feinneadha (O'Feeny), of Finned, a townland in the parish of Easky, lying westward of the river Finned. The Feenys were driven from their district by the O'Flannellys, who poured down on the lowlands when compelled to leave the shores of Lough Easky by the advance of the Anglo-Normans.

O'Muldoon, of Imleach-iseal (the low *Imleach*, or land verging on water), the ancient name of the townland of Castletown, now locally forgotten, but preserved in the Down Survey of the County of Sligo.

Further to the east lay the territory anciently called Muirsce, *i.e.*, Sea plain. It extended from the river Easky eastwards to the stream which flowed into the sea between the townlands of Ballyeeskeen and Doonycoy. According to the poem, it comprised the townlands of Rosslee, Cloonnagleavragh, Alternan, Doonaltan, Ballygilcash, Dunbeakin, Dunneil, and Ballyeeskeen, all situated between the rivers above mentioned.

3. The O'Conbhuidhes (O'Conways) were titular chiefs of Muirsce, and their sub-chiefs appear to have been—

(i.) O'Luachain, of Rosslee, a townland in the parish of Easky, east of the river Easky, at its mouth. Luachain is translated Rush, from an erroneous belief that it is derived from *luachair*, rushes.

(ii.) O'Rothlain (Rowley), of Cluain-na-g-cliabhhach and Alt-Fharnnain. The former name, now Cloonnagleavragh, a townland in the parish of Easky, forms a portion of the demense of Fortland. Alt-Fharannain (St. Farannan's cliff) is now Alter-

nan, a townland containing a holy well called St. Farannan's Vat or Keeve, in the parish of Easky, adjoining the parish of Templeboy. The O'Meenys deprived the O'Rowleys of their patrimony by treachery; and it is remarkable that in the immediate vicinity of Alternan there are four townlands, called Ballymeeny, *i.e.*, O'Meeny's Town.

(iii.) O'Duibhscuille, of Dun-Maildubh, *the dun of Maeldubh*, son of Fiachra Ealgach, grandson of King Dathi, and ancestor of the O'Dowds. This place is now unknown, but it is supposed to have been the ancient name of the townland of Rathmeel, west of the demense of Fortland, which derived its name from it. The name O'Duibhscuille, which might be anglicised Duscooley, or Duscully, has probably been shortened to Scully.

(iv.) O'Beollain (O'Boland) of Doonaltan, a townland containing the remains of a fort on the coast in the north of the parish of Templeboy. It is stated that this rath was situated near "the deep river mouth," referring to the Ballymeeny river, which there discharges itself into the sea.

(v.) Mac Gillachais (Mac Gilcash), of Gillachais. The name is now obsolete as applied to a family, but is retained in the townland of *Baile Mhic Giollachais*, now anglicised Ballygilcash, situate in the north of the parish of Kilmacshalgan. "The fair and strong rath," referred to in the poem as the residence of the proprietor, yet remains, but is not remarkable for size. It had been an enclosure round the house of a *brughaidh* or farmer, and not the residence of a head chief.

(vi.) Mag Eoghain (Mac Keon), and Clann Cuanan, of Dunm-becin, *i.e.*, Becin's fort, the Dunmekin of the old map of 1609, now Doonbeakin, a townland in the parish of Kilmacshalgan. Traces of this dun still remain on the west bank of the river of the name. Rath Cuanain, the seat of the clan of that name, is now Rathgoonaun, a wild and hilly townland in the parish of Kilmacshalgan. It comprises two raths. Cuanan, from whom this fort derived its appellation, was son of Cubuidhe (Conway), progenitor of the Conways; and Nial, from whom Dun-Neil was called, was also son of the above Cubuidhe, and brother of the founder of Rath Cuanan.

(vii.) O'Dhiscin, of Baile Ui Dhiscin. The name is retained in the townland now anglicised Ballyeeskeen, in the north of the parish of Templeboy.

O'Conway, the head chief of the district of Muirsce, resided at Dunneill, a townland in the parish of Kilmacshalgan, containing the remains of this dun, on a stream of the same name. He had seven sub-chiefs.

The most eastern townland in the district of Ballyeeskeen above referred to, is divided from the adjoining territory of Borrach by *Ath-cliath-Muirsce*, a ford on the stream which falls into the sea between the townlands of Carrowmacrory and Doonycoy. There are many places in Ireland called *Ath-cliath*, or the ford of the hurdles. The designation arose from a practice common among the ancient Irish of rendering shallow mud-bottomed rivers fordable, by means of hurdles or *keshes* laid down where they desired to pass. The ancient name of Dublin was *Ath-cliath*, hence came the habit of giving the name Dublin to various remote parts of the country, it being erroneously considered a correct rendering of the Irish name of *Ath-cliath*.<sup>1</sup>

4. O'Murchadha (Murphy) was head chief of the district of Borrach, which derived its name from the river. It contained the following townlands, known to this day by their ancient designations—Grangemore, Grangebeg, Ardogelly, Corkagh, and Doonflin—

- (i.) O'Suidhlearga.
- (ii.) O'Cooney or Coyne, and
- (iii.) O'Donoghoe jointly possessed Dun Ui Chobhthaigh, i.e., O'Coffey's fort, now Doonycoy, and in it can still be seen remains of the ancient dun.

(iv.) O'Colman, of Grangemore, in the parish of Templeboy. The old map of 1609 shows that a castle, or large dwelling-house, and a small village then existed at Grange.

(v.) O'Fuala, of Grangebeg. Here also a castle appears on the old map above referred to.

(vi.) O'Ceallaigh (O'Kelly), of Ard O'g-Ceallaigh, now Ardogelly, a townland in the parish of Templeboy.

(vii.) O'Loingsigh (Lynch or Lynch), of Corkach. This

<sup>1</sup> This transformation is thus explained by Joyce, "Irish Names of Places," p. 363: "The people, when speaking Irish, always called the metropolis, *Baile-atha-cliath*, and in English, Dublin. They imagined that the latter was a translation of the former, and translated the names of their own places accordingly."



townland has been divided into two parts; the larger, called Corkaghmore; and the smaller, Corkaghbeg. It is situated near the sea. O'Murchadha (Murphy), of Doonflin, a townland in the parish of Skreen, now divided into two parts; in the more northern of which is situated the dun or fort beside a little stream that flows through the townland. The O'Murchadha of the poem is mentioned as living in a "white wattled edifice," and he was, as before mentioned, head chief of the district of Bor-rach. The poet concludes his eulogy of this territory by saying it "was never wounded by a satire," *i.e.*, that its chiefs had never been satirised by the poets of Erin. The ancient Irish believed that by a satire, men could be afflicted with disease, grass and cornfields withered, &c.

5. O'Muirgheasa (Morrissy), was head chief of the territory of "The Strand," anciently designated Traigh Eothuil, now Traholly, near Tonrego. His sub-chiefs were—

(i.) O'Sinna, of Laragh, in the parish of Skreen. The name O'Sinna is now translated Fox.

The next five families are called the pillars of Skreen.

(ii.) Mag Rodan, now extinct.

(iii.) O'h-Oilmhic (O'Helvick); the townland of Altanelvick, in the parish of Dromard, derived its name from this sept.

(iv.) Mac Concathrach (Mac Carrick).

(v.) O'Snedarna, extinct.

(vi.) O'Rabhartaigh (O'Rafferty).<sup>1</sup>

(vii.) O'Baethghaile (Beahilly), of Cluain Ui Chosgraidh. This place is now forgotten, and nothing remains to denote its situation in the parish. It was evidently the name of a Ballybiatach, or large ancient Irish townland, and comprised several of the modern denominations.

(viii.) Mac Gilli Finn, of Lavagh, in the parish of Dromard, to the south-west of Longford Demense. In some parts of Ireland Lavagh is understood to mean "land of elms;" in others,

<sup>1</sup> In the "Dumb Book" of James Mac Firbis, "the pillars of Skreen," and the "props of the Kings of Hy-Fiachrach," are differently enumerated—viz. (i.) O'Rafferty. (ii.) Mac Carraoin (Currin). (iii.) O'Flanng-haile (Flannelly). (iv.) O'Tarpaigh (Torpy and Tarpy). The townland possessed by this latter family, in the parish of Skreen, is still called in Irish, Fearann Ui Tharpaigh; now modernised Farranyharpy.

“land abounding in the herb, marsh mallow.” The name Mac Gilli Finn is now unknown. The poet highly exalts the martial power of this family celebrated in various poems, and says that they supplied food to the ravens, by giving them human carcasses to feed upon, a description evidently intended as a high compliment to their warlike character.

(ix.) Mac Gilli Bricin, of Ardnaglass, in the parish of Skreen.

(x.) Mac Gillimir (Gillmore), of Finnabhair, now Finnure, a townland on the sea-coast in the north of the above parish.

(xi.) Mac Gilli Riabhaigh, of Creaghaun, a locality in the parish of Skreen. The former name is anglicised Kilrea, or Mac Ilrea.

(xii.) O’Liathain (Lyons), of Muine-na-fede, or Bun-na-fede, now Bunnafedia, a townland in the parish of Dromard.

(xiii.) Mac Conluain (Colwan), of Cuil-Cille-Bricin, now Carrowbrickeen, a townland in the parish of Skreen.

(xiv.) Mac Gilli-bhain, of Lis-na-remhur, *i.e.*, the massive fort, now Lisnarawer, a townland in the parish of Dromard, containing the remains of several lises or forts. The name Mac Gilli-bhain, *i.e.*, a white youth, is now anglicised White.

(xv.) O’Duinchinn, of Doire-na-n-ath, *i.e.*, the oak wood of the fords, a district, according to the poet, celebrated for its hazel brakes, but no trace of the designation has been preserved by tradition, neither does it appear on any old map. The name O’Duinchinn is now unknown in Tireragh.

(xvi.) O’h-Aodha (Hughes), of Ton-re-go. This strange designation may be correctly translated *podex ad mare*; it is a townland, containing the present house and demense of Tonrego. A late proprietor, examined before a commission relative to the advisability of, in every case, retaining the ancient names of Irish places, but translating them into English, gave his opinion against such a course, and as an example of the non-desirability of the plan, instanced the title of his own demesne. An unwary Saxon fell into the trap, and asked the witness to give the translation, which he did amidst peals of laughter. In the poem, this locality is called “the land of sloes and apples.”

(xvii.) O’Maonaigh (Meeny), held possessions in this part of the barony.

O’Muirgheasa, now Morrison, was head chief of this district



of "the Strand," and had seventeen sub-chiefs. His residence was at Lis-Ladhghaill; but this name, which would be anglicised Lislyle, is now forgotten.

It is very curious that some of the family names of the Tire-  
ragh chiefs had become obsolete so early as Duald Mac Firbis's  
time, when the English language was but little used in the dis-  
trict. The fact would seem to be that whole families were  
either exterminated, or driven out of the territory during the  
struggles between the families of O'Dowd, De Burgo, O'Conor,  
Sligo, and the later English settlement.

Mac Firbis thus quaintly moralises on the subject—

"The people of these our own times (17th century) wonder  
that such as they should have ever been in power in consequence  
of their fewness and feebleness at this day.

"But small is the cause of their wonder to one who compares  
the events of the world, and the subversion of ages, which brings  
such vicissitudes on the nations of the earth in general, driving  
the potent from territories, as the chieftains we have enumerated  
were driven."

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B O O K   I I .

CHAPTER IV.

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INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY AND INVASION  
OF THE DANES.





## BOOK II.

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### CHAPTER IV.

#### INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY AND INVASION OF THE DANES.

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“ Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The eager heart, the kindlier hand,  
Ring out the Darkness of the land,  
Ring in the CHRIST that is to be.”

TENNYSON.

“ — Norwegian warriors grim,  
Savage of heart, and large of limb,  
Threatening both continent and isle.

— city, tower, and spire,  
Reddened the midnight sky with fire,  
And shouting crews her navy bore  
Triumphant, to the victor shore.”

SIR WALTER SCOTT.



HERE are often epochs in the existence of a community of which the exact dates cannot be ascertained by formal appeal to ancient chronicles. The question as to the precise period when Christianity reached Ireland is of this nature; but the ecclesiastical policy and customs of the ancient Irish Churches point them out as derived from the east rather than from the west. They differed from the Western Church on many points—in doctrine, in church government, in the time of celebrating Easter,<sup>1</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> “At the decisive Synod of Whitby, in the dispute touching the rule of keeping Easter, Colman pleaded the authority of Ireland’s great saint, Columba. ‘Will he,’ replied Wilfred, ‘set the authority of Columba in



celibacy of the clergy, and the form of tonsure ; no supreme head was acknowledged ; there were no archbishops ; bishops were almost as numerous as parishes ; the sees often descended from father to son, and were usually held at pleasure of the chief of the district. The clergy were subject to taxation, to secular jurisdiction, and to military service ; there were no tithes, the clergy were supported by offerings and voluntary gifts ; the Scriptures were much studied, portions of the Old and New Testament were often transcribed.<sup>1</sup>

The natural conclusion is, therefore, that Christianity must have been first introduced into Ireland by missionaries of the Greek Church. Palladius was sent by Celestine not to pagans but to “ the Scots (*i.e.*, *Irish*) believing in Christ,” (*ad Scotos in Christo credentes*) ; his visit to Ireland was fruitless. St. Patrick, who arrived shortly after, was successful, not only amongst “ the Scots believing in Christ,” but also among the pagans. He proceeded with caution, and by slow degrees to sap and supplant paganism, smoothing every step towards the new faith by adaptations. The two great triumphs of Christianity in Ireland were the abolition of human sacrifices and of slavery ; the political institutions, the manners and customs of the people, remained unaltered.

At the period now touched upon, the majority of the inhabitants of Sligo were nominally Christians ; many, however, still clung

opposition to that of St. Peter, to whom were given the keys of heaven ? ‘ Do you acknowledge,’ said King Oswis—whose adherence was the prize of the debate—to Colman, ‘ that St. Peter has the keys of heaven ? ’ ‘ Unquestionably,’ replied Colman. ‘ Then for my part,’ said Oswis, ‘ I will hold to St. Peter, lest, when I offer myself at the gates of heaven, he should shut them against me.’ ”—*Goldwin Smith’s Irish History and Character*, p. 30.

<sup>1</sup> “ The hierarchy of the primitive Irish Church was most imperfect to a Roman eye. For a long time there were no archbishops. Bishops were multiplied with what, in Roman estimation, was a most irregular prodigality. (*St. Bernard De Vita S. Malachæ*, c. 10.) There seems to have been one in every village. But they were consecrated, against the Roman rule, by one bishop only. Hence their ordinations were questionable, and the Roman Churches looked askance on clergymen from Ireland with uncertain credentials, as a strict Anglican Bishop might at the present day.” —*Goldwin Smith’s Irish History and Character*, p. 33.

to the faith of their pagan forefathers, and it must be conceded that they had at least antiquity on their side—

“Great God ! I'd rather be  
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,  
Or hear Old Triton blow his wreathed horn.”

There was, however, an undefined border-line between Christian and pagan, of waverers who would fain strike a bargain with Heaven ; they would accept baptism if God would but grant them victory ; and Christian septs, after suffering defeat would often in disgust return to their former gods. These waverers were gradually absorbed by the advancing wave of Christianity—a wave that finally overspread the land ; but the pinnacles and heights which might be said to represent the superstitions and legends of paganism, remained uncovered. Even yet in remote and mountainous districts they linger, but with ever-diminishing strength.

Space does not permit, nor is it the scope of this work, to notice all the legends recounted of the daring missionaries who boldly confronted paganism in Sligo, with a bravery which throws in the shade the mere animal courage displayed by the chiefs in their internecine strife. If the chaff could be winnowed from the solid truth of these legends, the agglomeration of fanciful ornamentation in the narratives of the lives of these earlier saints removed,<sup>1</sup> then the moral conveyed by the legends would stand forth unmarred by the incongruous additions.

Christianity seems not to have moderated, but rather to have added zest to, the fighting proclivities of the chiefs ; for the next mention of Sligo in the Annals occurs A.D., 504, when it is stated that a battle was fought on the Curlew mountains between Murtogh MacEarca and Duach “ of the brazen tongue,” King of Connaught ; Duiseach, wife of MacEarca, incited her husband to rebel against her father, Duach, because he had made prisoner

<sup>1</sup> St. Patrick lights a fire with icicles ; the water congeals in a kettle notwithstanding the fire around it, &c., &c.—Jocelin's Life of St. Patrick

her foster-father, in violation of her husband's guarantee ; in the engagement Duach was defeated and slain.

A.D. 537, was fought the battle of Sligo, near the banks of the river Garvogue. Two sons of MacEarca and a son of Duach had risen in rebellion against Eoghan Bel, King of Connaught. The opposing forces met in battle array in a locality termed Crinder or Rinder, neither form of the name is now extant. The men of Connaught were marshalled under the Royal Banner, and each tribe under its chief ; but the fortune of war declared against Eoghan Bel ; the river ran red with the blood of his warriors, and the current was choked with the numbers slain. The king, according to the Annals of the Four Masters, lost his life, the victors cut off his head, and carried it northwards in triumphant procession across the plain of Magherow, through which district the Ulster army generally marched into Connaught. Another account,<sup>1</sup> relates that Eoghan Bel, though mortally wounded, yet survived for several days. He directed that after death he was to be interred at Rathoveeragh,<sup>2</sup> near Sligo, in a standing position, his blood-stained javelin in his hand, his face turned towards Ulster as if fighting with his enemies. His instructions were carried out, and the result was said to be that as long as the body was left in that position, the Connaughtmen were invincible, and the men of Ulster always fled before them in terror. At length the latter, learning the cause of their defeats, disinterred the body of Eoghan Bel, and carrying it northwards over the river of Sligo, buried it head downwards, so as to counteract the talismanic effect of his previous underground attitude. This re-interment was effected in the cemetery of *Eanach-locha-Gile*, somewhere within the present Demesne of Hazlewood, a modern name, which on land has completely superseded the old Irish designation. But Celtic nomenclature is long-lived, and dies hard ; though banished from *terra firma* it has taken up its habitat on the waters, and survives in the designations Annagh Bay and Annagh Island. The ancient orthography, *eanach*, pronounced annagh, signifies literally a watery place, derived from *ean*, water ; the

<sup>1</sup> Life of St. Ceallach, son of Eoghan Bel, quoted by O'Donovan.

<sup>2</sup> Not identified ; it is written *Rath-Obh-Fiachrach*, but there is a townland within the present town of Sligo still called *Caltragh*, or the Burying-ground.



swamps have been drained, the land forested or placed under cultivation, yet the old name lingers, to attest, in these days, the existence of morasses in ages long past. It is very curious that in some parts of the country the people still retain a dim traditional memory of this mode of sepulture, the reversal of the usual position of a warrior in his last resting-place, and of the superstition connected with it. In the Parish of Erregal, in Derry, is a locality "called Laghtaverty, the *laght* or sepulchral monument of the *abhartach* (avertagh) or dwarf." This dwarf was a magician, also a dreadful tyrant, and after having perpetrated great cruelties on the people, he was at last vanquished and slain by Finn Mac Cumhail. He was buried in a standing position, but the following day he appeared in his old haunts more cruel and vigorous than ever. The chief slew him a second time, and buried him as before; but again he escaped from the grave, and spread terror through the whole country. Finn, thereupon, consulted a Druid, and by his instruction he slew the dwarf a third time, and buried him in the same place with his *head downwards*, which device subdued the magical power, so that the dwarf never again appeared on earth.<sup>1</sup> The custom of interring kings and chiefs in a standing position is often referred to in Irish historical tales. King Loeghaire, contemporary with St. Patrick, but who never would allow himself to be converted to Christianity, was buried like a grand old pagan, in the external rampart of Tara, erect, in military harness, weapon in hand, his face turned southwards towards his enemies, the men of Leinster, as if fighting with them, or bidding them defiance.<sup>2</sup>

In the life of St. Ceallach, it is related that on his death-bed, Eoghan Bel counselled the Hy-Fiachrach to elect his son, Ceallach, to be King of Connaught in his stead. Accordingly, messengers were sent to him at Clonmacnoise, and Ceallach accepted the offered dignity despite the remonstrance and threats of St. Kieran, under whose tuition he was then residing. The saint thereupon solemnly cursed his pupil; and although a reconciliation afterwards took place, and Ceallach, entering the

<sup>1</sup> Joyce's Irish Names of Places, pp. 300-1.

<sup>2</sup> O'Donovan's Notes to Hy-Fiachrach, pp. 471-3.

priesthood, attained the episcopal dignity, the curse was still efficacious, and could not be revoked. King Guaire Aidhne conceived a mortal hatred of Bishop Ceallach, who, in consequence of the implacable rage of the monarch, resigned his see, and retired to the seclusion of an island on Lough Conn. He was murdered by four of his pupils at the king's instigation, and thus St. Kieran's curse was fulfilled. Cuconegelt, brother of the bishop, succeeded in capturing the murderers, and carried them in chains to a place since called Ardnaree, where he slew them on the banks of the Moy. From this execution the hill overlooking the river was called *Ard-na-riagh*, i.e., the hill of execution. This, in turn, bequeathed its name to a village on the east side of the stream, which may be considered a suburb of Ballina. The hill of Ardnaree immediately adjoins the village; a stronghold formerly stood upon it, from which cause it is now generally called Castle Hill. The corpses of the four murderers were interred on the summit of a hill on the Mayo bank of the river, called *Ard-na-Maol*,<sup>1</sup> i.e., the height or hill of the Maols, from the four pupils of St. Ceallach, whose names had all the prefix Maol. A more circumstantial account of the execution and interment is given in the *Dinsennchus* in the book of Laccan.<sup>2</sup> The monument is still in existence on the west bank of the river Moy, nearly opposite to the hill of Ardnaree. It is a remarkable cromlech, supported by three pillar stones, now popularly called "the table of the Giants." This is the only cromlech in Ireland which can be satisfactorily connected with history.<sup>3</sup>

The next notice of Sligo occurs A.D. 561, when Curnan, son of the King of Connaught, pursued by Dermot MacCerbhaill, King of Ireland, took refuge with Saint Columbkille, from whose position and sanctity he hoped for protection; the fury of Curnan's pursuer, however, was checked by no consideration of reverence or regard for the saint; the youth was dragged from the arms of his protector and murdered in his presence. This outrage, bearing the double character of sacrilege and cruelty,

<sup>1</sup> *Leacht-na-Maol*, i.e., the tomb of the Maols in the *Dinsennchus*.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. 246.

<sup>3</sup> O'Donovan's Notes to "Hy-Fiachrach," p. 34-5.

aroused the slumbering passions of the choleric saint,<sup>1</sup> who, for personal reasons, was already incensed against King Dermot, and he thundered forth these words: "I will go unto my brethren, the races of Connell and of Eoghan, and I will give thee battle in revenge for this unjust judgment thou hast given against me respecting the book, and in revenge for the killing of the son of the King of Connaught, when under my protection."

It is remarkable that Columbkille should have given more prominent place to the adverse judgment pronounced by the king against himself than to the murder. Columbkille, who seems to have been more industrious in circulating the written Scriptures than Saint Finan,<sup>2</sup> had made a transcript of a portion of the sacred writings from a manuscript belonging to the latter, who, on hearing this, demanded to have the copy also. The king, when referred to, decided in favour of St. Finan, despite Columbkille's plea, that he had not in the slightest degree injured St. Finan's manuscript by transcribing it, and that Finan should not oppose multiplying the Scriptures for the instruction of the people. The king gave judgment in these words: *La gach boin na boinin, &c., i.e.,* To every cow belongs its calf, &c., basing his decision on the principle that amongst domestic animals the offspring belongs to the owner of the dam. Columbkille fled from the ire of the king to Ulster, and his relations, the northern sept of O'Neill, joined in his feelings of revenge against the monarch, who threatened to carry fire and sword into the territory of the saint's protectors. They collected a force of 3,000 men, and marched into Sligo, where they were joined by the Connaughtmen. King Dermot, who had an army of but 2,300 men, consisting of charioteers, cavalry, and foot, advanced to meet his enemies, and the opposing forces came into collision at *Cul-Dreimhne*, now Cooldrumman,<sup>3</sup> near the little village of Carney.

<sup>1</sup> "Giraldus" (who must, however, be taken *cum grano salis*), "notes that even the Irish Saints appeared like the Irish themselves, to be remarkably vindictive. They were made after the image of a half Christianised people."—Goldwin Smith's "Irish History and Character," p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> O'Donovan, *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey*.

<sup>3</sup> Upper and Lower Cooldrumman, two townlands containing about 450 acres, which extend on either side of the road a quarter of a mile north



During the battle Finan offered up prayers for the success of King Dermot's army; but the men of Ulster and Connaught had the advantage of the more efficacious devotions of Columbkille. It is said that the spot on which he knelt during the battle was afterwards called *Suidhe-Cholaim-Chille*, Columbkille's seat. King Dermot's army was defeated with great slaughter, whilst one of Columbkille's people alone was slain, owing to his having exceeded certain bounds, beyond which the saint's prayers were supposed to be subordinate to the Druidical incantations of a magician who was with King Dermot's array. The relative loss of the two armies so incredibly disproportionate, is accounted for by the assertion, that during the battle, in answer to Columbkille's prayer, a gigantic angel made his appearance in the ranks of Tyrone and Connaught, striking their enemies with panic and dismay. Statements of this nature, of which it may be said with Usher, "*quod poeticâ magis quam historicâ fide habetur hic descriptum*," although they cannot be received as truth, are yet valuable as exhibiting the mode of thought of the age, and as indicating what may be called the actual poetry of the age of saints.<sup>1</sup> After the battle, king and saint made peace on the terms that the copy made from St. Finan's manuscript should be given up to Columbkille. This manuscript copy of the Psalter was thenceforth known as the *Cathach*,<sup>2</sup> or warrior, and was afterwards carried by the O'Don-

of Carney. In the locality are seven raths, also an ancient well, called Tobervogue. Colgan, in "*Trias-Thaum*," p. 452, thus describes the situation of the battle-field—"Est locus in regione Carbriæ in Connacia, non procul a Sligoensi oppido versus Aquilonem situs. Historiam hujus prælii fuse enarrat Ketennus libro ii., de Regibus Hiberniæ, in gestis Diermitii Regis. Prælium hoc non anno 551 ut scribunt Quatuor Magistri in annalibus, sed anno 561, commissum fuit ut tradunt Annales Ultonienses et Usseus de Primordiis Ecclesiar; Britann, p. 694." This passage also fixes the date of the conflict, and there is no other name or place in the northern part of Sligo bearing so great a similarity to Cul-Dreimhne both as regards orthography and situation.

<sup>1</sup> Wills' "*Irish Nation*," Vol. I., p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> The *Cathach* was long carefully preserved in the O'Donnell family, who looked on Columbkille as their Patron Saint. In 1723, Colonel Daniel O'Donnell, an officer in the French service, for its better preservation, enclosed the original case containing the manuscript, with another of silver, as mentioned in an inscription engraved on the cover, and it has

nells in all their battles as symbol of victory. For having incited his relatives to fight this battle, Columbkille was excommunicated by an Irish synod.<sup>1</sup> He then sailed to Iona, where he obtained great celebrity as a missionary and disseminator of the Scriptures; as also in Caledonia, which presented a wide field wherein to work and expend the energy of his naturally impetuous disposition. Some of the saint's biographers have completely ignored the subject of this battle. O'Donovan, in his notes to the Four Masters, thus alludes to this omission:—

“The bards and lay writers, on the other hand, who did not understand the nature of panegyric as well as Cumian and Adamnan, have represented Columbkille as warlike, which they regarded as praiseworthy, for it implied that he possessed the characteristics of his great ancestors, Niall Naighiallach and Conall Gulban; and these, in their rude simplicity, have left us more materials for forming a true estimate of his character than are supplied by the more artful descriptions of his miracles and visions of Cumian and Adamnan.”

of late years been deposited by Sir Richard O'Donnell in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy. The inner or original case of the manuscript was a brass box  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length, 8 inches in breadth, and 2 inches in depth; the top was a plate of silver, gilt and chased, riveted to the brass, and on it was a representation of Columbkille, of the Crucifixion, and different subjects; the corners and other parts were set with crystals, pearls, sapphires, amethysts, &c.

<sup>1</sup> “Then it follows that the saints of Ireland, reflecting that Columbkille had been either the originator or the occasion of this mischievous war, gave it as their common opinion that he ought, by some public humiliation, to do what lay in his power to remedy the scandal on religion to which his conduct was calculated to give rise; and they referred him to St. Lasrean (otherwise called Molaise), of Devenish, as the person most suitable to suggest what course to pursue in this emergency. Columbkille received the advice with humility, and acted accordingly; and the sentence of Molaise was—‘That he should spend the rest of his life an exile in a foreign soil, where he should attach more persons to Christ than had fallen in the war.’ The Saint, sorrowful but resigned, replied, ‘It shall be done.’”

This sentence must have been afterwards annulled, for Columbkille paid a short visit to Ireland in 575.—*King*, Vol. I., p. 80. *Lanigan's Ecc. Hist.*, II., 146.

In the "Chronicon Scotorum," Columbkille's celebrated prayer, offered up before the battle, is given; but the wording is so obscure that it is no easy matter to deduce from the text whether the saint only contrasted our Saviour's real power with the supposed power of the old Druidical magic, or whether he really believed that he was calling into action both the powers of Christianity and those of Darkness. This strange belief in the spells of the ancient Druids lingered for many ages. Among primitive Christians the belief was very general that the demons of the old heathen systems of the world were still permitted to roam upon earth, "to torment the bodies and seduce the minds of sinful men." The Christians of the middle ages also believed in the existence of the heathen deities, looking upon them as devils. Even St. Patrick was imbued in some degree with this belief, and in the great contest at Tara he was not without apprehension of the effects which might result from the incantations of the Druids. If the mind of the great Apostle of Christianity in Ireland was not free from this idea, it can create little surprise that one of his successors should be tainted with the superstition. The only really authentic works from St. Patrick's pen which have been preserved are his truly Catholic confession,<sup>1</sup> his epistle to Coroticus, and his Hymn. In the sixth stanza of this latter occurs the only blot—

"So have I invoked all these virtues between me (and these),  
 Against every cruel, merciless power which may come against my  
     body and my soul,  
 Against incantations of false prophets,  
 Against black laws of heathenry,  
 Against false laws of heretics,  
 Against craft of idolatry,  
 Against spells of women and *smiths*<sup>2</sup> and *Druids*,  
 Against every knowledge that defiles men's souls."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Confessio Patricii*, as remarkable for its simple reflection of the mind and spirit of a Christian, as for its total freedom from the usual style of the legends of the dark ages of literature.

<sup>2</sup> A probable reference to the Tuatha de Danans, celebrated metal workers.

<sup>3</sup> Olden's "St. Patrick," pp. 107-8.



There is a marked similarity between this stanza and the prayer of Columbkille at the battle of Cooldrumman—

“O God!

Why dost Thou not disperse the mist,  
That we might reckon the number  
Of the host which has taken judgment from us,  
A host that marches round a cairn,  
And a wrathful man that betrays us ;  
My Druid, he will not refuse us ; is  
The Son of God ; with us He will side ;  
How grandly He bears His course ;  
Baedan's steed before the host ;  
Good for Baedan of the yellow hair,  
He will win his renown on him.”

In the fourth line the saint alludes to the adverse judgment pronounced against him by the king ; and from the statement that his opponents marched round a cairn, the deduction may with safety be drawn that King Dermot and his army were heathens. The meaning of the four last lines is very obscure, the translation conjectural. Hennessy, in his edition of the “Chronicon Scotorum,” is of opinion that the original text is corrupted.

There is a legend that Columbkille's first attempts to build on Iona were rendered vain by the operation of some evil spirit ; the walls fell down as fast as erected, and it was revealed to Columbkille that they could never stand until a human victim was buried alive beneath the foundations. One account says, the lot fell on a companion of the saint, named Oran, as the victim required for the success of the undertaking ; another states that Oran voluntarily devoted himself, and was accordingly interred alive. At the end of three days, Columbkille, wishing to take a farewell look at his old friend, ordered the removal of the earth. Oran thereupon raised his swimming eyes, and said, “There is no wonder in death, *and hell is not as it is reported.*” The saint, shocked at this impiety, instantly ordered the earth to be flung in again, uttering, in Irish, the words : “Earth ! earth ! on the mouth of Oran, *that he may blab no more.*” This passed into a proverb, in use in the Highlands at the present day.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “The Antiquary,” Vol. III., p. 11.

Such is the purport of this strange narrative, but it seems worthy of but little credit. Columbkille returned to Ireland in the year 575, for the purpose of attending the assembly of Drumkeath, held under Hugh, then supreme monarch, to settle some very important questions connected with the affairs of the kingdom, in which the saint took no small interest. At the dissolution of the convention he repaired to Sligo, where he founded a church somewhere in Carbury, and "proceeded from thence to a place called Easdara (Ballysodare), where all the prelates of the neighbouring regions, and vast numbers of holy men and women, had come to meet him; and to say nothing of the rest of the multitude, which was almost beyond counting."<sup>1</sup> These crowds accompanied him across the strand into the present barony of Tireragh. He continued in Ireland some time, visiting the different religious establishments which he had founded. He then returned to Iona, nor does it appear that he left it any more till the time of his death, A.D. 597, aged 77.

In 598 a battle was fought at Aughris (*Eachross*), a well-known promontory in Tireragh. The combatants on the one side were the *Cinel Cairbre*, or inhabitants of the present barony of Carbury, headed by Colman, their chief; on the other, the *Cinel Fiachrach* of Muirsee,<sup>2</sup> or inhabitants of Tireragh, led by Maelcolthaigh. The Carbreans were victorious.

In 630 a battle was fought on the Curlews (*Seaghais*), in which fell Loichen, son of Neachtain Ceannfoda, and Comasgach, son of Aengas. In 673 occurred a conflict at Collooney (*Cul-Maine*), when the two sons of Magloughlin were slain; and in 681 fell Donogh, son of Malduff, King of Connaught, surnamed Muirsee from his having lived or been fostered in the territory so named in Tireragh. The same year a battle took place in Corran, between the inhabitants of that district and the Carbreans; the latter would appear to have been defeated, as two of their chiefs were killed.

In 701, after a reign of eight years over all Ireland, Loingseach was defeated and slain at the battle of Corran, by Ceallach, a Galway chief, from whose brother, Fergus, are descended the

<sup>1</sup> "Acta Sanctorum," p. 337.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, p. 123-5.



O'Conors of Connaught. Ceallach appears to have been both warrior and poet, for after the battle he composed these lines:—

“ For his deeds of ambition  
On the morning he was slain at Glais-chuilg,  
I wounded Loingseach there with the sword  
The monarch of all Ireland round.”

This combat, with the consequent loss of life, was produced by a satirical poem, written by a bard in ridicule of the king.

In 787 the tribes of Tireragh (*Ui Fiachrach-Muirisce*) totally defeated and almost exterminated the inhabitants of the Owles, a territory in Mayo.

In 790 the people of Tirerrill defeated the three tribes of Leyny, led by their chief, Dubhdathuath, who was slain at *Ath-Ross*, or the ford of the wood; the locality has not been identified.

In 807 the Danish Vikings, or Northern Rovers, appeared off the Sligo coast with a fleet<sup>1</sup> of 50 ships, and devastated the island of Innismurray. In the previous year they had captured and sacked Iona, putting seventy monks to the sword. The effect of their first swoop on the Connaught littoral appears to have been the destruction of the religious establishment on Innismurray. Encouraged by this success, they penetrated in-

<sup>1</sup> “ The Scandinavians fitted out powerful fleets, having great facilities for the purpose afforded by the magnificent oak and pine forests of Norway, &c., and the chief power of those pirate kings consisted in their ships and maritime forces; and it is mentioned by the Danish historians quoted by Mallett, that Harold, King of Denmark, and Hacon, a Norwegian Viking, in the tenth century, had a fleet of seven hundred ships; and according to Turner's account of the battle of Brunanburgh, in Northumberland, in the tenth century, Aulaf, the Danish King of Dublin, and his allies, entered the Humber with a fleet of 615 ships. The Danish and Norwegian kings who invaded England and Ireland in the ninth and tenth centuries, had frequently fleets of 200 and 300 ships. These vessels are stated by Mallett to have been originally small galleys, sometimes twelve-oared barks; but in the tenth and eleventh centuries they had ships capable of containing 100 or 120 men each; and Harold Harfager, and Olaf, Kings of Norway, are mentioned to have constructed huge long ships, called dragons and serpents, some of them carrying thirty-four banks of rowers.”—*Notes to Connellan's edition of the “ Four Masters.”*



land, burning the town of Sligo and neighbouring villages, as well as carrying fire and sword into Roscommon, their destructive course, marked by dense clouds of smoke from blazing hamlets. In 812 and in 813 they repeated their raids on Sligo, and villages in Scandinavia grew into cities from the riches drawn from these and other similar spoliations.

“Though nothing can excuse, in the eyes of the nineteenth century, the bloody deeds of these sea-robbers, there is one fact connected with the history of their time and country which affords a reason, if not palliation, for their enormities. It was a law at that time for the whole patrimony to descend to the eldest son, leaving nothing to the younger sons. These latter were, therefore, almost compelled to take up arms, and by a piratical career, seek in distant lands those means of subsistence which their fatherland withheld from them.” Added to which, “that might is right was a maxim in those days as religiously believed in as it was universally acted upon. Those who had, must have the strength to keep; those who had not, took from those who were weaker than themselves.”<sup>1</sup>

In the Irish Annals these marauders are called “Gentiles,”<sup>2</sup> a very suitable designation in a Christian point of view; they

<sup>1</sup> “The Viking Ship,” by J. Harris Stone.

<sup>2</sup> *Geinte*, that is, Gentiles or Pagans. The Northmen who invaded Ireland in the eighth and ninth centuries, were, according to the opinions of Usher, Ware, and others, a mixture of Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes, with Finlanders, Frisians, Livonians, Esthonians, Courlanders, and Saxons, from the countries about the Baltic, and from parts of Russia, Prussia, Germany, and Holland. The Danes and Norwegians, the predominant nationalities, were designated by the Irish as *Dubh-Gheinte*, or Dark Gentiles, meaning the Danes, and *Fionn-Gheinte*, or Fair Gentiles, signifying Norwegians. They were also called by the Irish, *Lochlannaigh*, or lake-dwellers; but again, in this designation a distinction was made by the Irish between the Danes and Norwegians, from the colour of their hair and complexion, the Danes being denominated *Dubh-Lochlannaigh*, i.e., Black Lake-dwellers, and the Norwegians *Fionn-Lochlannaigh*, or White Lake-dwellers. *Gaill*, signifying strangers or foreigners, was very generally applied to the Danes or Norwegians by Irish writers, and in this term they also made the same distinction between them, designating the Danes *Dubh-Ghaill*, Dark Foreigners, and the Norwegians *Fionn-Ghaill*, or Fair Foreigners.

were Pagans, and therefore regarded by the semi-Christianized Irish in the same light as uncircumcised Philistines by the Israelites. There was little to choose between the worshipper of Thor and the merely nominal worshipper of Christ; for although the monasteries of Ireland produced many scholars whose piety and learning were justly celebrated over Christendom, the mass of the people still retained their semi-barbarous habits. This superficial literary lustre was dimmed and finally extinguished by the ravages of these Scandinavian rovers, who, having harried the shores of England, broke like a tornado on Ireland; and although their power was shaken by the defeat they sustained at Clontarf in 1014, their spoliations can hardly be said to have ceased when the Anglo-Norman settlement commenced; the kingdom split into numerous petty principalities; the constant dissensions of the various tribes, and the merely nominal power of the nominal king, rendered Ireland an easy prey to these Rovers.

One of the galleys which the ancient Vikings made their home, in death as well as in life, was in 1880 discovered near Christiana, in Norway; and as antiquaries have fixed the date of its entombment at about A.D. 800, when Scandinavia was still divided amongst these wild chiefs and sea-kings, it will be interesting to have a description of the kind of vessel that at the same period of time must have ploughed the waters of Sligo Bay.

On the sea-shore, near Sandeford, in Norway, was a tumulus locally known as "King's Hill." Under this, tradition averred, a mighty warrior had been buried. Whilst sinking a well, the entire body of an old Viking vessel was laid bare; it was 77 ft. 11 in. long between stem and stern, 16 ft. 6 in. broad amidships; twenty ribs remained in their places. The galley, judging by its proportions, must have drawn nearly six feet of water. It lay stem to sea; amidships reposed the Viking, surrounded by remains of men, horses, dogs, cooking utensils, drinking-cups, &c., so that, like Eoghan Bel, when the great Father should call him, the chief might start, fully equipped, from the tomb; but more than a thousand years have rolled along since his galley "walked the waters like a thing of life," and still he awaits his call. Along the free-board were ranged

a hundred shields ;<sup>1</sup> in the hull, or hold, were small boats and a quantity of oars. The hundred bucklers which hung on the gunwale of the disintombed vessel represented one hundred fighting men. There must have been mariners also to look after the sails ; indeed, to man such a ship a large crew was required. No wonder, therefore, that a fleet of these galleys should strike terror along any coast off which they hovered.

The Vikings arrived at Innismurray in fifty ships ; taking an average of one hundred as the complement to each, the conclusion may be arrived at that this expedition consisted of 5,000 men.

Nothing can well be more thrilling than the *sagas*, or stories, of these semi-arctic adventurers, starting from out the fogs and ice-floes of the north in barks that to a modern trader would seem mere boats. The rough crew may be pictured cowering under the bulwarks and clinging to the frozen shrouds as seas swept the deck, either scudding before the gale, or lying to and biding their time till the weather moderated, and they might turn their prow with a favouring wind to the ill-fated shore. Then, as the weather moderates, “ we can hear the wild songs

<sup>1</sup> “ Their shields and bucklers were mostly made of wood, sometimes covered with skins of animals, sometimes made of wicker-work, or interwoven oziers and small rods ; their chiefs sometimes used iron and brazen shields, and many of them were ornamented or embossed with silver ; the shields were of oval form, and many of them so large as to cover the entire body ; and in battle, when hard pressed, they made a rampart of their shields by locking them into each other in a circle, within which they were defended from the darts of their enemy. Their shields also formed a shelter, or sort of tent, when encamping on the fields in wet weather. Their helmets were mostly made of strong leather, but the chiefs wore iron and brazen helmets. Their coats of mail, breast-plates, thigh and leg armour, were sometimes of leather, but the chiefs mostly used those made of iron, brass, and other metals. . . . The chief weapon of the Northmen was the battle-axe, which was double-edged and very heavy, and when wielded by a powerful arm was capable of cleaving through iron helmets, and armour with a single blow ; they also used battle-hammers, and clubs studded with short spikes and knobs of iron. Their swords were short, strong, and crooked like scimitars, but they sometimes used long straight swords ; they also used long spears, javelins, darts, daggers, slings, bows, and arrows.”—*Notes to Connellan's Edition of the “ Four Masters.”*



of the rowers ; we can listen to the sound of the curling water foaming under her bows as she rushes, like some great sea-monster, through the waves ; we note the whistling wind and the taut bellying of her great square sail, and the fine determined face of the man at the helm.”<sup>1</sup>

At the mast-head flew the standard of the Vikings, the dread Raven, sacred to Odin, their God of War. This bird, noted for fierceness and cunning, was portrayed with open beak and expanded wings, and it was supposed that if this standard fluttered forward in the breeze, it presaged victory ; but if it drooped, it portended defeat.

“ From the bleak Scandinavian shore  
The Dane his Raven Standard bore,  
It rose amidst the whitening foam  
When the fierce robber hated home ;  
And as he ploughed the watery way  
The Raven seemed to scent its prey,  
Outstretched the gloomy ominous wing,  
For feast of carnage war must bring.”

It is impossible to read the sagas and mythology of Scandinavia without noticing that galleys were regarded in the light of animate objects by the Vikings. Thus, when one of these robber-chiefs was sent, as a punishment for his having committed sacrilege, to demand tribute from the Orkneys, the storm spirits riding on whales oppose the progress of the vessel. The Viking thus addresses his ship :—

“ Now, *Ellida*, let us see  
If in truth thou bearest  
Valour in thine iron-fastened  
Breast of bended oak.”

And the good ship hears and obeys—

“ Heed *Ellida* giveth  
To her Lord’s bequest,  
With a bound she cleaveth  
Deep the monster’s breast.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “The Viking Ship,” by J. Harris Stone.

The religion of the Scandinavians inculcated as the highest of all virtues courage and contempt of death; heroes who fell in battle were for ever honoured and feasted at magnificent banquets in the halls of Odin. The death-song of Lodbrog, who frequently harried the Irish coasts, is an embodiment of this spirit. He was a skald, as well as a warrior, and in his death-throes he sees Walhalla and the portal of Odin's Hall thrown open, where Odin and his boon companions awaited the entry of their compeer, and in the act of expiring Lodbrog exclaims:—

“ Now cease my song, O Goddess fair,  
Lead me to Odin's hall, and there,  
Enraptured 'neath that lofty dome,  
With Gods I'll quaff the ale afoam.<sup>1</sup>  
Skall! Skall!<sup>2</sup> the Viking's course is run,  
An emblem meet, yon setting sun.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The old sea-kings, in imitation of their gods, quaffed their ale out of cups made of the crania of their enemies. The difference between these old Scandinavian rovers and modern publishers has been thus defined: that whereas the former drank their ale out of skulls of their enemies, the latter drink it out of the skulls of their friends—the authors.

<sup>2</sup> Skall, or Skaal (pronounced Skoal), a toast or invitation to drink. In pagan days, toasts were drank to the memory of the heathen deities; in Christian times, to the memory of the saints. Often, under the combined influence of ale and strong mental excitement, the Norsemen became dangerous, and had “ Berserk's gang,” i.e., a fighting frenzy, (which may be compared to the madness displayed by a Malay running “ a muck,”) his only desire to slay or be slain, and thus attain Walhalla, where

“ From the flowing bowl  
Deep drinks the warrior's soul;  
Skoal! to the Northland Skoal!”

The Scandinavians conducted marauding expeditions to Ireland and elsewhere with great system and forethought.

“ It was customary, say the records, for the owner of a farm to sow his seed in the spring of the year, and then to set out on the so-called ‘ Spring Viking.’ He then returned home about midsummer, and after seeing his crops housed, again set out on the ‘ Autumn Viking,’ from which he did not return until about the end of November, when he remained quietly with his followers at home over the winter.”—*Keyser's ‘ Private Life of the Old Northmen,’* p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> It is impossible in a translation to convey the force of the original.

Warriors imbued with pseudo-religious ideas of this nature—ideas very similar to those promulgated by Mahomet—were entirely reckless of life, and capable of any deed of heroism.

Innismurray, the *Inis-Muireadhaigh* of the Annals, the first place in Sligo ravaged by the Vikings, deserves a detailed description. The island is situated amidst the stormy billows of the Atlantic, about four miles from the nearest land, which is Streedagh Point, in the parish of Ahamlish; to this ecclesiastical division the island also belongs. Those who are not accustomed to “go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters,” who do not enjoy being rocked by the long swell of the Western Ocean, should wait till “fair laughs the morn and soft the zephyr blows,” then, loosing from the little jetty at Streedagh, they will scarcely have ceased admiring the magnificent panorama of the Sligo and Donegal mountains, when the boat, gliding round the rocky point, shoots into Clashymore (*great dyke*) Harbour, in Innismurray. This harbour, a natural cleft in the rock, about three fathoms deep at low water, is tolerably protected from every gale but the south-west. The aspect of the island is bare and desolate, a rocky mass rising from the sea, a table-land with precipitous sides, sheer towards the Atlantic, but low towards the south, where the monastery-cashel is situated. The island comprises about 200 acres, of which 130 consist of shallow soil, of moory character, capable of feeding some sheep, a few cows, donkeys, and horses; these animals appear to divide their grazing proclivities equally between the scanty herbage and the sea-weed. The remaining portion of the island is mere rock. The entire extent is little more than a mile in length, from Kinavally (*head of the land*), otherwise Portiargh Point, on the west, to Rue (*red*) Point on the east, and at the widest point about half a mile in breadth. Due north of the island, at a distance of two miles, are three large rocks, extremely dangerous to navigation: (i.) Bomore, the name probably alludes to the shelter (*boh*) erected by hunters engaged in pursuit of seals, which at certain seasons resort to it in great numbers; (ii.) Shaddon; (iii.) the smallest of the trio has no name.

The large group of ecclesiastical ruins encircled by the ancient



cashel offers the best and most characteristic example now in existence of the primal monastic establishments in Ireland.

Although in a state of desolation and ruin when Petrie visited it in 1837, he, nevertheless, considered it in sufficient preservation to denote perfectly its original state. Under superintendence (?) of the Board of Works it has been in some degree restored; but more is required; some things have been done which might well have been left undone. The eye is at once struck by the discordance of the new work, and fresh pointing, with the ancient portion of the building hoary with age, and grey and green with lichen; but time will again score wrinkles on its ancient features. The cashel is apparently as old as the celebrated Staigue Fort in Kerry, Dun Conor, and other cashels in Arran and various parts, all of which are universally acknowledged by antiquarians to belong to a time in Ireland ante-Christian, for the cashel rampart resembles other great stone walls of the prehistoric forts which line the western coast of Connaught.

O'Donovan looked upon the rampart as a work more than 2,000 years old, in short, a Firbolg fortress, which existed long before the Patron of Ferns (St. Molaise) placed his establishment within its bounds.<sup>1</sup> An ecclesiastic about to found a church in such disturbed times, would naturally avail himself of a fortress already in existence; and it is well known that the early converts amongst the chiefs were lavish in their gifts to the clergy for the endowment of their newly-adopted Faith. The wall varies in height from 14 to 18 feet; the stones are similar to those on the shores of the island, of a nature easily quarried, and separated into such blocks as compose the wall. The greatest internal diameter of the cashel is 175 feet from north-east to south-west; it is only 135 feet from south-east to north-west; the depth of the wall on the north side is from 11 to 13 feet; and on the south side from 7 to 8 feet. On the north the stones are larger, better selected and placed, than on the other fronts; they lie lengthways, their sides facing outwards; there is no appearance of cement or mortar in the work, which bears all the marks of remotest antiquity. A portion of the old wall, being in a dangerous state, was pulled

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

down for the purpose of being rebuilt. In the interstices were found bones and sea-shells in great quantities, whilst outside the ramparts heaps of shells were discovered, probably refuse thrown over the walls.

The water-gate or north-east entrance has remained perfect from prehistoric times. This cyclopean doorway, spared by the hand of envious time, and protected from the vandal utilitarian by the veneration of the natives, is 6 feet 3 inches in height, and 7 feet 6 inches in depth ; the sides incline 5 inches inwards towards the top, where it is 3 feet wide. The term water-gate may be accounted for by its proximity to St. Molaise's well, and through this door all islanders of the male sex who meet a watery death, are carried into the cashel for interment.

The southern entrance had been destroyed ; but during the restoration the lintel was discovered, and it was then rebuilt.<sup>1</sup>

To the west, as you enter, is an incline which leads to the top of the wall ; it is in its original condition ; and it is probable there is an unexplored chamber underneath it. Between the south and water-gate there is a flagged pathway running parallel with the wall on the inside, probably intended for passage of men to line the parapet. In the depth of the wall are small recesses, restored by the Board of Works as stations (!) and containing crosses carved on flagstones,<sup>2</sup> but which were evidently the vestiges of steps placed at regular intervals for the purpose of enabling the defenders to reach the ramparts. To the north are two low entrances, one close to the sweat-house, the other at *Tempul-na-tinne* ; both appear to have been formerly subterranean passages, seemingly dust-shoots, drains, or kitchen middens. They are passable if the explorer be of slight build.

Over the latter of these passages are three restored inclines ; they lead to the summit of the old wall, which even before restoration, was 18 feet in height. From the platform, originally even higher, the entire island can be overlooked ; and it commands an uninterrupted view of the Northern Ocean. How

<sup>1</sup> Rebuilt in such a manner that the ghost of the Firbolg architect is said to be seen nightly wringing his hands beside it in an agony of despair, that nineteenth century gazers should imagine that he was capable of such work.

<sup>2</sup> These flagstones were found in various parts of the enclosure.

great must have been the flutter of the confraternity when the look out on the parapet announced the appearance of the Raven Standard ; for it is but natural to suppose that the walls were provided with some kind of breast-work to protect the defenders from the darts and missiles of assailants. The walls were not calculated to resist the shock of a battering-ram, and a mast from one of the galleys of the rovers, if unshipped, and so used, would quickly have brought down the wall with a crash.

The interior of the enclosure presents a most remarkable appearance. There are churches, cells, houses shaped like beehives, tombs, altars, and crosses. Within the cashel are three churches ; the largest, formerly designated *Tempul-na-bfear*, the Church of the Men, is now more commonly known as the Monastery. It is situated towards the east centre of the enclosure.

Island tradition gives to it priority in antiquity over its companion churches, and states it to have been the joint work of St. Molaise (pronounced Molash by the islanders) and St. Columbkille ; but the impetuous and fiery disposition of the latter did not accord with the mildness of the former, therefore he betook himself to the mainland, leaving Molaise in peaceful possession.

There is no reason to suppose that Molaise was the first abbot of the monastery, had he been so, the island would, doubtless, have borne his name : for example, the island of Senach, off the coast of Kerry, was named after the saint who there founded the monastery ; and Muiredach, a follower of St. Patrick, placed by him over the Church of Killala, a century before the time of Molaise, was probably the saint from whom Innismurray derived its name, and by whom the first establishment on the island was founded. In the Annals the names of but two successors of Molaise are mentioned.

Dicolla, son of Meinde, abbot of the monastery, died 747, and Mac Laisre, an erudite scholar, probably also abbot of the island, died 798. These are the scant notices relative to this church.

The walls of the edifice are of the same rough stone as the cashel ; very little binding material was used ; from what remains it seems to have been a kind of grouting mixture of shells



and adhesive clay. At either side of the east gable are projecting buttresses, 1 foot in depth and 2 feet 4 inches in width; the building is 25 feet 6 inches long and 12 feet wide; the walls 2 feet 3 inches thick; the doorway 4 feet 6 inches high, and 2 feet 2 inches wide at the sill; the sides incline inwards 5 inches at the top; the east window, very rude in character, is deeply splayed, four little steps forming the splay, the top, consisting of two stones, form an inner and outer arch, hollowed out of the stone. A *bullaun*, or font, lies on the ground at the door.

This edifice also received the name of *Tempul-na-bfear*, the Church of the men, in contradistinction to another chapel, situated outside the cashel, and near the seashore, called *Tempul-na-m-ban*, the Church of the women. In the former, men only are interred; in the latter, women. The islanders believe that if a man be buried in the Church of the women, he is supernaturally removed to the Church of the men, and *vice versá*, Molaise, being anxious to keep men and women apart, even in death; a great example of morality which the present generation might, with advantage, copy.

The oratory of St. Molaise is situated close to the wall at the north side; it is cemented with shelly lime mortar; has a high pitched stone roof, and straight side arches, apparently of more recent date than the walls of the building; the door is 4 feet high, with vertical jambs; depth of wall 2 feet 2 inches at base of east window; at base of east wall are four little steps similar to those in the monastery; the window is but 1 foot 4 inches in height, and 1 foot 3 inches wide at the base; its sides incline inwards 2 inches to the spring of the arch. At the east end of the oratory, underneath this window, is an altar formed of rough stones, similar to another elevation at the south end of the church, where the islanders say Molaise is interred. This chapel formerly possessed several monumental commemorative slabs which, with one exception, have all been destroyed.

On this slab is the following inscription:—

“*OR ro muredach  
hú Chomocain  
hic doirmit.*”

*I.e.*, “Pray for Muredach,  
Grandson of Chomocain  
(Who) sleeps here.”

O'Donovan suggested that the above Muredach, anglicé Murray, is the person from whom the island took its name.<sup>1</sup> The cutting on the flag is clear and distinct. The island is mentioned under its present name in A.D. 747. If O'Donovan's theory be correct, the inscription would be of the seventh or eighth century at the latest. A small fragment, ornamented with a cross, is inscribed in Irish  $\overline{\text{OR}} \text{ } \text{oo}$  "Pray for." The rest of the tablet is missing.

Set in the wall of the rampart, near the church, is a flag with a cross graven on it, "crux" being the only word decipherable.

The curious in search of antiquities should be warned that imitation flagstones are being fabricated on the island to delude unsuspecting archæologists into making purchases. With the aid of some moss, and a little earth, these flagstones are calculated to deceive even an experienced eye. Near the church, in a (modern and Board of Works) recess is a fragment of an inscription, in Irish character, of which some words and letters are legible, but not sufficient to arrive at the meaning. It is in fact so nearly obliterated by the heavy hand of Old Father Time, that even the chisel of "Old Mortality" would scarce succeed in renovating the ancient lettering.<sup>2</sup>

Of three additional inscribed stones within the cashel, illustrations are given in the "Christian Inscriptions of Ireland."<sup>3</sup> In the chapel of St. Molaise is preserved a remarkable wooden figure, apparently representing an ecclesiastic in a chasuble. It is believed by the islanders to be an effigy of their Patron, Molaise, the tutor of Columbkille, and to be the work of a celebrated sculptor (!) who flourished in the sixth century, and to have been preserved in the island ever since. How then did it escape the ruthless hands of the Danes? The figure is formed of oak, about 4 feet 6 inches in height, now much worn and defaced; the face seems to have been long and emaciated, judging from what remains of it; the hands, which appear to have been placed in the attitude of either thanksgiving or benediction, were broken off, the back of the saint hollowed, and the nose chopped

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Wakeman has recently taken a rubbing, and is engaged in trying to decipher the meaning.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. II., p. 15.

off by the unhallowed hands of some unbelievers, who managed, undiscovered by the islanders, to abduct, mutilate, and cast the figure into the sea on their return to the mainland. Next morning, however, the saint was again in his accustomed place in the chapel, but minus his extremities. Owing to this mutilation the historical antiquarian has very little to guide him in a decision as to whether this image be really a production of the sixth century—a saint, formerly placed in a chapel of one of the galleons of the Spanish Armada wrecked in the immediate vicinity—or one that adorned the prow of some vessel trading between the British Isles and America, as stated by unbelievers in the antiquity of this figure, who assert that the figure-head of a merchantman, wrecked near Innismurray, was borne in safety by the waves and cast on the beach; the inhabitants, seeing a figure rising as it were from the ocean, imagined it to be their titular saint, and deposited it in the chapel. Most antiquaries are of opinion that the figure is a good specimen of fourteenth century sculpture.<sup>1</sup>

The third and last church within the enclosure is called *Tempul-na-tinne*, the Church of the fire; it is of more recent date than either of the preceding, but the masonry is inferior; the walls are 2 feet 3 inches thick; the church 17 feet long, and 11 feet 3 inches wide; the door, which is in the south wall, is 5 feet 6 inches high; the lintel of this door consists of a large flag, on which a curious cross is engraved, the ornamentation half concealed in the wall; this demonstrates that the building was constructed with the materials of one still more ancient. The east window is narrow and flat-topped. The aperture in the north wall was probably used as a door, being almost on a level with the ground. Its designation of “Church of the Fire” is derived from the belief that on the floor of the building, on a flagstone called *Leac-na-tinne*, or the fire-stone, fire was always kept burning by the monks for the use of the islanders; others assert that whenever any householder wanted kindling for his fire, a sod of turf or piece of wood deposited on this spot imme-

<sup>1</sup> O'Donovan, in his correspondence prior to the Ordnance Survey, makes a most vivacious onslaught on Protestants for asserting that the natives formerly worshipped this image. He states they did not pay it divine honors, *i.e.*, *Latria*, but only *Doulia*, or *Hyper Doulia*.



diately ignited. Not many years ago, if any dependance can be placed on oral tradition, a Scotchman had the profane assurance, whilst visiting the island, to desecrate the sacred fire-stone of St. Molaise. Though of placid temperament, the insulted saint and patron of the island implored his God to work a miracle for the confusion of the impious miscreant, whereupon a supernatural fire, issuing from *Leac-na-tinne*, reduced the wretch to a cinder, and the islanders still point to his calcined bones as a warning to unbelievers.

A cell, at the east side of the south door of the church, is long and narrow, extending to the east end of the church; it is commonly called the penitentiary or punishment cell, where refractory monks were incarcerated and kept on low diet. It is 8 feet 6 inches long, 2 feet 6 inches wide, and 5 feet high; the roof, slightly sloping to the south, is composed of flagstones, some of which are displaced. The "punishment cell" story is a modern invention. The so-called cell is merely a portion of the passage originally connecting *Tempul-na-tinne*, and St. Molaise's chapel. On examining the western termination of the cell, it becomes clear that there existed formerly a means of access which has long been closed. An explorer, by descending into a square chamber, the roof of which has given way, can proceed as far as the cell, and then return to the outer rampart through the continuation of the same passage. Before the restoration (!) by the Board of Works this passage did not end in a *cul-de-sac*, under an incline covered by a slight flag, but terminated in a small oblong chamber, in which was a door opening opposite the western entrance of St. Molaise's chapel. This door existed fifteen or twenty years ago, at which period both chamber and doorway were partly demolished by revenue men in search of illicit spirits. Traces of the door are still distinctly observable.

The Clochaun, the largest of the cells, is about 13 feet in diameter and 14 feet high; the walls commence to slope nearly from the ground; the doorway is formed externally of two long and nearly upright flags, with a lintel; a small window faces the south-west. Within, on the right-hand side, is a low flat projection from the base of the wall, which looks like a seat or bench, and which gives to the place the popular designation of the school-house. In shape the structure exactly resembles a

bee-hive. O'Donovan was convinced that these stone-roofed houses were of Pagan origin, and afterwards utilised by the monks.

In the western portion of the cashel an interior wall stretches from St. Molaise's Chapel, forming, between it and the outer rampart, an enclosure, within which are situated *Tempul-na-tinne*, the school-house, and various other cells and passages. All this area stands at a considerably higher level, and is of sufficient elevation to admit of passages and small cells beneath. If a proper exploration were made, more objects of interest might possibly be discovered. Close to the school-house appears to be the top of a bee-hive cell, buried in the earth, but no exploration was made around by the Board of Works. Within the opening in the interior wall, which forms the mode of access to *Tempul-na-tinne*, there is a narrow passage to the left; this leads into a small chamber about 5 feet by 4 feet, and 5 feet in height; the roof is dome-shaped. From the entrance to this narrow passage, at a distance of 16 feet, is the doorway into *Tempul-na-tinne*; the passage then narrows, and turns along the wall of the church, where it terminates in the door into the schoolhouse.

At the north-east portion of the cashel, the clochaun or cell called *Trahan a Corgaoir*, the Lent Trahan, or place of prayers, deserves notice. The islanders maintain that it was there, the monks sang their vespers. In the north side there is a door 3 feet 6 inches high, 2 feet 6 inches wide; this leads into a chamber about 6 feet by 5 feet, above which is another of the same size.

From this clochaun a wall extends towards St. Molaise's Chapel, and joins the cashel wall. A second enclosure is thus formed, the object of which is not now apparent. Within this is the very peculiar uneven passage through the rampart already noticed, seemingly a drain or dust-shoot. A small doorway, 2 feet in width, opens upon a straight passage, which widens to about 3 feet, and at 7 feet from the door the level suddenly drops a couple of feet. The passage again narrows and ends in an opening in the external wall. The bottom or floor of this passage or drain is filled with shells, lime, and bones of various mammalia. There is a passage through the rampart opposite

*Tempul-na-tinne*, characterised by the same peculiarities; it is 2 feet in width at the inner end, increasing to 2 feet 6 inches in the centre; this passage expands into a sort of chamber, 5 feet by four feet. The level here drops, and a doorway, 2 feet 6 inches high and 2 feet wide, opens in the external face of the wall.

A short distance to the west of this passage is a very small opening in the wall, leading to a chamber 7 feet 6 inches by 5 feet, and 4 feet in height; the roof is slightly domical; large flagstones cover the centre, the ends overlap each other from west to east; only a man of very slight build could crawl through the door. Near this chamber is a passage about 5 feet in length; a small doorway gives admittance to a chamber 5 feet square and 4 feet high; it has a window in the external wall 2 feet wide, its height being only 18 inches. A small square chamber may be observed in the wall a few feet to the south of this apartment.

About 30 feet east of the southern entrance to the cashel is a small oval chamber, now filled with half-decayed straw. Three feet above there is another small apartment, also filled with old straw bedding; it has a flattish roof, and the door is two feet square. Whenever a man is interred within the enclosure, the straw bed on which he died is forced into one of these receptacles.

Within the cashel are three structures, called by the people *leachta*, or beds. The largest and nearest to the south entrance is called *Clocha-Breaca*, the speckled stones. It is seven feet square and three feet high, the top covered with rounded stones of different sizes, appearing as if smoothed by constant rolling on the beach. On several of these are cut crosses, circles, and other devices; they are arranged in such a manner as to render it a difficult matter to reckon them; indeed, according to the statement of natives, these stones can never be correctly counted. The inhabitants say that if a man who has been wronged makes the circuit, termed the Way of the Cross, nine times, while repeating the necessary prayers, then turns the stones, at each turn cursing his adversary, the curse, of whatever nature it may be, will assuredly fall upon that person, if guilty; but if innocent, then the imprecation recoils upon the individual who utters it—an exemplification of the ancient homely proverb, that



“curses, like chickens, come home to roost.” The dread of retribution of this nature inspires such an amount of awe as to prevent rash anathemas. The evil wish most generally expressed is, that the anathematised person should either die soon or lose his reason. With regard to the primary use of the stones, or the origin of the form of cursing, no suggestion can be offered, but it would not seem to be of *Christian* source.

On the north side of the *Clocha-Breaca* lies a stone cist or tomb, the covering slab shattered in pieces by revenue men in search of spirits. It is called *Tumba Maoilen O'Dhalaigh*, Moylan O'Daly's tomb. The islanders say he was a *wicked* saint, and they recount various traditions relating to him, but none worthy of note. His spirit seems to have been more than commonly restless and unquiet—so much so, indeed, as to attract the attention of the revenue, and cause them at various times to perform stations to his tomb. The islanders point out a flagstone, in which is a depression or round hole, made by O'Daly in forcing his head through when confined for his sins in this tomb; but it presents rather the appearance of the saint having rested on it after his violent exertions; it really resembles the remains of an old font, or a receptacle for holy water. This tomb is certainly the resting-place of *Maoilen O'Dhalaigh*, whose death on All Souls' Day, A.D. 1612, is noted by the Four Masters. They accord to him a more respectable character, saying he was buried in the cashel, “after bearing triumph from the world and the Devil; and let everyone who reads this give a blessing on his soul.”

The second tomb, situated near the south entrance, is 5 feet 6 inches by 5 feet, height 3 feet. The third, 8 feet by 6 feet, lies between the monastery and the east wall, and both tombs are formed of rough stones. Flagstones with inscribed crosses and various ornamental designs are too numerous to describe; but two very curious praying stones, with niches in the sides and two small holes in the face of the stone, deserve notice. Women about to add to the number of the inhabitants, offer up prayers for their safe recovery before these stones; by placing their fingers in the side and their thumbs in the front holes, they are enabled to rise with more ease from their kneeling position. The prayers thus offered appear to be very efficacious;

no deaths take place on the island from such a cause. It is difficult to conjecture the original use of these stones.

Outside the cashel, to the north-west, is a curious little building of bee-hive construction—a small clochaun, or cell; its dimensions about 5 feet by 4 feet. On the north side is the doorway, 2 feet square. The islanders call it the Sweat House. Tradition has it that their ancestors went into this cell for the purpose of undergoing a course of perspiration, the place having been previously heated, but whether for penance, atonement for sins, or improvement of their health, tradition does not record.

A few feet outside the cashel wall is a never-failing spring, called St. Molaise's Well. It is protected by a dome-shaped building, 7 feet by 6 feet, and covered by large flagstones. The height of the doorway is 6 feet, the width at bottom nearly 4 feet, narrowing to 3 feet at top; the descent to the water is by five steps. It is strange that a military position such as the cashel should have been unprovided with any apparent water-supply inside the ramparts. It may be said that in these early ages there were no regular sieges, and that forts were taken by surprise or sudden assault. It was not always, however, so; for in the *Dinnsenchus* it is recounted that the fort of Dunbare, in the district of the Rosses, was beleaguered for a year and six months! Attached to the external face of the rampart, at the north-east angle of the cashel, is one of the *leachta*, or beds. Could it be the remains of an outwork of the ancient fortification?

Between the fort and the shore are the ruins of the church already mentioned, Tempul-na-m-ban, also called Tempul Muire, Mary's Church. The mason-work is not good, nor does it appear ancient; the south wall is in a falling state. Its dimensions are 28 feet by 13 feet. The east window is narrow and square-headed. There are two square recesses in the north and south wall, and over them narrow square-headed windows. Close to the door are the remains of a small bullaun, or font, and in an enclosure to the south-east of the church are three *leachta*.

Other noteworthy localities on the island, starting east of Clashmore Harbour, and making the tour of the shore, are as follows: (i.) *Ollamurray*, a station; (ii.) *Trahan-na-rigfear*,

the strand place of the chiefs ; (iii.) *Pollnashantunny*, the cavern of the old wave. A place of similar name existed near Derry in the time of Manus O'Donnell, A.D. 1520, but the locality has not been identified. *Pollnashantunny*, one of the objects of most interest on Innismurray, is a cleft in the precipitous cliffs running due north and south. The portion of this cleft near the sea is covered over, but more inland it widens, and opens out at its termination into a shelving, boulder-strewn beach. It is curious to stand on this, and gaze through the lofty narrow fissure at the blue glint of the sea and the flitting sea-birds. When a heavy gale is blowing, and huge seas tumble in from the south, it must present a totally different aspect. A shot fired into the cavern awakes the most thundering responses. (iv.) *Crossmore*, large cross ; a station. (v.) *Trahanee*, Hugh's strand place ; there is on one of the flagstones a mark resembling the track of a child's foot, to which is attached a long and rambling legend. (vi.) *Tobernacoragh*, the well of aid or assistance. Whenever either the islanders or dwellers on the opposite coasts are too long detained on the island by tempestuous weather, the inhabitants drain off this well into the sea and repeat certain prayers, which cause the storm to subside immediately ; this miracle is wrought by God through His servant, St. Molaise, who, before he departed to realms above, blessed this well, and granted to its waters, when intermingled with those of the Atlantic, the power of allaying the wrath of old ocean. The natives say that strangers from the neighbouring island of Ireland ! are of late often detained on Innismurray for weeks before the storms subside, even though this "Well of Assistance"<sup>1</sup> be drained to the ocean to assuage the fury of old Neptune. It would thus appear that St. Molaise does not now befriend them with like favour as in days of yore, before the unsaintly art of distillation was introduced ; but *tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*. Police and a police-barrack may now be seen on the island, so the well may again be efficacious, and the islanders become a peaceable, law-abiding people, ignorant of stills and distillation. They may again live

<sup>1</sup> A *Tobernacoragh* appears in the Annals as the name of a well in the County of Donegal. O'Donovan states he searched for it in vain, but imagined he identified it with one called *Toberstan*, healing well.



solely by fishing, kelp-burning, and cultivation of their holdings ; they may even peaceably pay the county taxes, but this *desideratum* is not likely to occur much short of the Millennium. (vii.) *Altar*, a station. (viii.) *Laghta Patrick*, Patrick's monument, a square pile of stones ; on the top stands an ornamental stone cross. (ix.) *Crois-na-Trinoide*, the Cross of the Trinity. (x.) *Leachta Cholain Cille*, Columbkille's monuments. (xi.) *Reilic Odrain*, Odrain's burying-place. Other localities which may be mentioned are (xii.) *Portacurry*, the landing-place of the marsh, sometimes used instead of Clashymore Harbour ; and (xiii.) *Teernaneane*, the place of the birds, so called from its being a favourite resort of sea-fowl. To the south of the island is a rock, called (xiv.) *Guiachan*, from its resemblance to a "stack."

When O'Donovan visited the island in 1836, he found but five family names, viz. : O'Heraghty,<sup>1</sup> O'Hart, O'Curret, Brady, and O'Boyle. There were 102 inhabitants, who at that period married almost entirely amongst themselves, and whenever the island became overstocked, the surplus population sought their fortunes on the mainland. Increased intercourse has added the names of many intruders to the original population. According to the census of 1881, there are now 101 inhabitants, named respectively Heraghty, Hart, Brady, Boyle, Waters, MacGowan, Dunleavy, Hoey, and Mannion. The name Curret has disappeared ; and "tell it not in Gath," there was only one person unacquainted with the Saxon tongue on the island, and that one a woman of great age.

To add to the sufferings, not merely of Innismurray, but of the County of Sligo in general, from the Danes, Muirges, King of Connaught, A.D. 810, devastated and laid waste the whole of Leyny, in consequence of his two sons having been slain by the men of that district, who had thus taken vengeance for the previous slaughter of one of their chiefs by the king ; and in this manner the vendetta raged. The Danes, astute enough to profit by the dissensions of the various chiefs, espoused for the time being

<sup>1</sup> "The O'Heraghtys, who were never a sept of any distinction, were located in the present County Donegal, where they are still numerous. Some of them are on the island of Innismurray, where they have changed the name to Geraghty."—*MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

the cause of the party having most to offer; and when the adversaries whom they had been employed to conquer were overthrown, they then turned upon their allies.

Owing to these repeated devastations of the country, the diminution of kine was so considerable that, probably to remedy the deficiency, the rule of "Darií the Nun" was promulgated in Connaught. It is stated in the Book of Laccan that this rule, which savours of Eastern origin, and is described as one of the great rules of Ireland, was a prohibition to kill cows.

Year after year the Annals record the ravages of the Danes. In 830 Turgesius, a powerful Viking, overran and destroyed the entire province of Connaught. His followers were indulged in all the licence which in rude times was held to be the soldier's right, and the evils thus inflicted can only be understood by an attentive reader of the history of those early ages. Churches sacked and burnt :

" Wasting fire and dying groan,  
And priests slain on the altar stone ;"

towns, villages, hamlets, houses, left in smouldering heaps. The meagre description given in the Annals records naught but the mere fact of their destruction, but it does not require much imagination to fill in the outline. Almost a thousand years after the first appearance of the Danes on the Irish coasts, and five hundred years after their invasions had ceased, the arrival of Danish troops in the ranks of William III.'s army, and the traditional horror with which the Danes and the Raven Standard were even then regarded by the native Irish, is thus described by one of our greatest historians: "It was reported that of all the soldiers of William, these were most dreaded by the Irish. For centuries of Saxon domination had not effaced the recollection of the violence and cruelty of the Scandinavian sea-kings, and an ancient prophecy that the Danes would one day destroy the children of the soil was still repeated with superstitious horror." In 844, Norsemen<sup>1</sup> plundered and burnt Collooney, and attacked the dun, or fort, from which, however, the Irish

<sup>1</sup> Called "Cailli," "evidently the name of a party of Norsemen," says O'Donovan. For the duration of sieges, see *ante*, p. 160.

afterwards forced them to retire, after a fortnight's siege. The devastation and destruction of this terrible period caused forests to reappear where clearances had been made long before, for nature seems ever ready to conceal with her green mantle the signs of ruin and desolation wrought by the ruthless violence of the destroyer.

The next glimpse of Sligo shows the Irish again fighting amongst themselves. In 909, Niall Glunduff defeated Maelcluich and the Connaughtmen with great slaughter. Maelcluich himself was killed. The scene of this conflict was Gulban-Guirt, which is one of the ancient names of Ben-Bulbin mountain. The Maelcluich, *anglice* Mulcloys, were, as already recounted, at one time powerful chiefs in the county—a fact attested by the name Inishmulclohy, still retained in the Ordnance Map, although popularly known as Coney or Dorran's Island. The traditional cause of the extinction or decline of the Mulcloys is, that St. Patrick, while residing in the island which bears their name, received some insult from the chief of that day. In retaliation, the saint pronounced a curse against him and his posterity, in consequence of which his descendants are so few in number, and so scattered over the country, that "four of the name are never met at a funeral."<sup>1</sup> In 971, Murragh Glunillor, chief of Elagh, a district of Ulster, invaded Sligo, and gained a victory at the battle of Kesh Corran, when Cathal, King of Connaught, and several chiefs, with their followers, fell. Glunillor then plundered the entire province without further opposition. The monarch of Ireland, immortalised by the poet Moore in the lines—

“ When Malachi wore the collar of gold  
Which he won from the proud invader”—

not content with fighting the Danes, in the year 984 turned his arms against his subjects, ravaged Connaught, demolished its island-fortified dwellings, and slew their chiefs. These fortifica-

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.* Ecclesiastical power was in those days in great repute. It is related in the "Four Masters" that twelve men were crossing Lough Gara in a boat, carrying a valuable relic, the crozier or episcopal crook of Ciaran; the boat was upset and the men drowned, but the relic was saved.



tions are by some called stockaded islands; they seem to have been used as places of refuge, also for purposes of defence.

In 1003 an army was led by the celebrated Brian Boru into North Connaught, for the purpose of taking hostages from all the chiefs; but on reaching Traholly Strand, he learnt that the Ulster men were concentrated in Cuil-irra, near Ballysodare. Brian thought discretion the better part of valour, and retreated, on the principle that

“ Those that fly may fight again,  
Which he can never do that's slain.”

The Danes were relentless foes of the clergy, and of the whole system of Christianity. Neither do the native Irish chiefs of that period appear to have regarded the priesthood with any special reverence, if the commands of their spiritual advisers ran counter to their own wishes. In 1007, O'Rorke, chief of Brefney, settled a dispute between himself and Bishop Murdoch by smoking him to death in a cave in Galenga of Corran.<sup>1</sup> O'Donovan, with some appearance of plausibility, surmised this to have been one of the curious caves in the cliffs of Kesh-Corran Hill, connected with which, extraordinary legends are still current amongst the peasantry.

In 1010, Brian Boru invaded Magh-Corran, a locality at present not identified, but probably the plain of Corran, in Sligo. The following year Flaherty undertook a pillaging expedition as far as Drumcliff and Traholly Strand, near Ballysodare. In 1014 occurred the famous battle of Clontarf, in which the Danes were completely defeated, their hold on Ireland loosened and finally thrown off.

In 1024, O'Muldorrey, chief of Donegal, and O'Rorke, chief of Brefney, fought at *Ath-na-croisi* (i.e., the ford of the cross), in the present barony of Corran; the exact locality has not been identified. O'Rorke was there routed, with the loss of two thousand men. From the description of the poet, the victors appear to have given no quarter.

“ The great battle of Ath-na-croisi  
Was fought by men without mercy,  
Corran was thickly strewn with corpses,  
Tirconnell gained this great victory.”

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<sup>1</sup> Chronicon Scotorum.

In 1051, Tigernan O'Rorke, chief of Brefney, undertook a predatory incursion to the plains of *Eabha*, now Magherow, and demolished the fort of Dunfeich. Fifty of the defenders were slain, and 700 cows fell into Tigernan's hands. The dun has not been identified; probably it was the fort now called *Dun-Iartharach*, or the West Fort, situated on the hill of Knocklane, in the parish of Drumcliff. This fort is on the western slope of the hill, overhanging the sea; it is defended by a fosse and mound on the south-east; and about eighty paces distant there is another fosse and mound, which extend across the whole breadth of the declivity.

In 1057, Hugh O'Conor plundered and devastated Leyny. In 1063, MacLoughlin, a northern chief, poured a large force into Sligo, and overran Leyny as far as the bounds of Tirawley, in Mayo, and "the chieftains of Connaught came into his house," a figurative way of describing their submission to him.

In 1087, Roderick O'Conor, surnamed "of the yellow hound," King of Connaught, defeated Hugh O'Rorke at the battle of *Conachail*, now Cunghill, a townland in the parish of Achonry and barony of Leyny, but formerly comprised in Corran. O'Rorke, with a great number of his chiefs, fell. In the words of a poet, who commemorates this victory—

"Seven years and eighty there are  
And a thousand full and fair  
Since Christ immaculate was born  
To the battle of Conachail in Corran."

In the *Chronicon Scotorum* it is stated that this battle took place (according to the chronology of that work) in 1083, and it mentions that Cormac O'Cillen, "chief Vice-Abbot" of the tribe of the O'Conors of Connaught, stood in the forefront of the battle, with the staff of Ciaran in his hand. This is the relic mentioned as having been saved in Lough Gara, after the upsetting of a boat, in the year 930.<sup>1</sup> The Four Masters omit mention of the intervention of this Abbot militant, who could congratulate himself on belonging to the victorious side.

In 1095, Taichlech O'Hara, with a great number of his followers, inhabitants of Leyny, were slain by the tribes of Leitrim.

<sup>1</sup> See *ante* foot-note, p. 164.

In 1109, Niall, an Ulster chief, plundered the barony of Corran, made many captures, and carried off a great number of cattle.

In 1124 the castle of Collooney (*Cuil-maile*) was erected. In another part of Connaught, two other castles, Ballinasloe and Galway, were built the same year. The Irish, as a general rule, did not erect castles or stone fortifications of any kind, save *cashels*, till long after the invasion of Henry II. In Harris' "Hibernica" it is stated that at the time of the Anglo-Norman invasion, though there were walled towns, and those mostly of Danish origin, there were not five castles in the whole of Ireland. In the early ages the Irish, disdaining towns or castles, regarded personal bravery in the field as the best defence against an invading force. It is to be regretted that the site of this pre-Norman castle in Collooney has not been discovered, for by its aid might have been ascertained the description of building used by the Irish for strongholds, during the first transition stage between the abandonment of the ancient *lises* and *cashels* and the epoch of stone and mortar. Of the castle erected subsequently, in 1408, at Collooney, a considerable portion was utilised in the erection of Lord Bellamont's mansion, *circum*. 1655. Even thus dilapidated, the remaining walls of the edifice of 1408 were sufficiently high, about half a century ago, to be used by the country-people for playing ball. The walls were finally levelled, and the materials used for the construction of a bridge over the Unshin river at Union Wood.

In 1131, Conor MacLoughlin invaded Sligo from Ulster with a large force. The Connaught men attacked him in rear when he was traversing the defiles of the Curlew mountains, and MacLoughlin's force suffered severely. On the morrow the chiefs of the two armies met on the shores of Lough Key, near Boyle, and concluded a year's truce.

In 1135 Corran was ravaged by the tribes of Leitrim; in 1137 Connaught was devastated from the river Drowes to the Shannon; and in 1144 Corran was plundered by O'Rorke of Brefney.

In 1151, Neil MacLoughlin led an Ulster force over the ford of Assaroe, near Ballyshannon, through Carbury as far as the Curlew mountains, where he was met by Torlogh O'Conor, King



of Connaught, who submitted to him and gave hostages, upon which the Northern army returned home. Two years subsequently, Cathal, son of the above Torlogh O'Connor, was killed by the Calregians, one of the tribes of Corran. In 1155, Tigernan O'Rorke, chief of Brefney, made a plundering incursion into Corran, and carried off great spoil of cattle. In 1181, a battle was fought at *Cnoc Cairbre*,<sup>1</sup> a locality in the present barony of Carbury, between the Tirconnellians, led by Flaherty O'Muldorrey, and the Connaughtmen. The latter were defeated with great loss, and sixteen of their most notable chiefs slain. A long list of their names is given, but could be of no interest to a modern reader. In the "Annals of Lough Key," the battle-field is called Magh-Dinghbha.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not identified. Since this chapter has gone through the press, a closer examination of the map, made in 1609, of the Sligo and Donegal coasts, disclosed the interesting fact that Innismurray was therein described as ENISHE HUMAE, or MURRIE. The former name may be a corruption of Inis-na-lainne, where, in A.D. 1209, the Erenagh of Drumcliff and sixty other persons were burnt to death. On the map above alluded to, the rocks to the north of Innismurray are designated ROSHOE. It may here be likewise observed that the situation of St. Molaise's well, *outside* the cashel walls in Innismurray, is not really the very peculiar arrangement it first appeared to be. Fortifications were usually constructed on high ground; wells were consequently sunk on the low ground outside the enclosure. Genesis xxiy. 11 and xlix. 22, 23—also 2 Sam. xxiii. 15, 16—indicate the position of wells as being outside the defences; it should, too, be borne in mind that even still, in most Eastern lands, wells are found outside the walls of cities.

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BOOK III.

CHAPTER V.

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ANGLO-NORMAN CONQUEST.





## BOOK III.

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### CHAPTER V.

#### ANGLO-NORMAN CONQUEST.

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“Th’ imperial ensign, which full high advanced,  
Shone like a meteor streaming in the wind.”

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“ — the struck eagle, stretched upon the plain,  
No more through rolling clouds to soar again,  
Viewed his own feather on the fatal dart,  
And winged the shaft that quiver’d in his heart.”



THE application of Dermot Mac Murrough, King of Leinster, to Henry II., for English aid against his own subjects, produced very important results to Ireland. The cause of Dermot's flight was long popularly supposed to have been his abduction of the wife of Tigernan O'Rorke, chief of Brefney; but this adventure with the frail Devorgail occurred in 1153, quite thirteen years before Dermot fled to England. In this long interval, and in a country so unsettled as Ireland, many violent and sudden changes of fortune occurred to rival chiefs; and in his "History of Ireland," and in his character of Historian, Moore performed the task of exposing the figments of the Bard.

Henry II., on receiving the oath of allegiance from Dermot Mac Murrough, permitted his English subjects to give aid in the recovery of his kingdom. Richard de Clare, better known as

Strongbow, raised a large force in support of the deposed chief. In 1170 this force landed at Wexford, which was soon reduced. Waterford and Dublin quickly followed, and before the lapse of many years there were few districts in the kingdom which did not feel the influence of these new invaders.

The first distinct mention of the appearance of the Anglo-Normans in Sligo occurs in 1187, when the monastery of Drumcliff was plundered by Malachy O'Rorke, chief of Brefney, and "the foreigners of Meath," *i.e.*, the Anglo-Norman settlers in that district. "But God and St. Columbkille did not let them go scathless." O'Rorke was killed within a fortnight after committing this sacrilege, and Cathal O'Rorke was blinded by the Prince of Tirconnell, and six score of his name were slain throughout Leitrim and Carbury.

Drumcliff (the ridge of the baskets), was a place of great antiquity, and gave its name (as before stated) as an addenda to Carbury; but from the distracted state of the country, and the consequent ravages, it sank into comparative obscurity, and dwindled from a considerable town to an insignificant hamlet. St. Patrick passed through it on his way from Killaspugbrone to Ulster.

The Church of Drumcliff<sup>1</sup> was founded by St. Columbkille. The site was granted to him by Aedh, son of Ainmire, King of Ireland, *circum.* 575; and in a poem, attributed to St. Columbkille, are the following lines, which prove both his connection with, and attachment to, Drumcliff—

" Beloved to my heart, also is the west,  
Drumcliff at Culcinne's Strand." <sup>2</sup>

According to the Dinnsenchus, Drumcliff derived its name from a fleet of wickerwork boats (*cliabh curach*), fitted out there

<sup>1</sup> The first abbot was Mothairen, a disciple of Columbkille.

<sup>2</sup> Adamnan's "Life of St. Columbkille," p. 287. Culcinne was the ancient name of the Strand near the Church, according to local tradition. It must, however, be observed that the late Sir William Wilde called Traholly, *Tracuchullin*, *i.e.*, Cuchullin's Strand (*vide* "Kilkenny Archæological Journal," vol. xi., p. 142); but this supposition is opposed, not only to local tradition, but also to the Annals of the Four Masters.

by Curnan Cosduff, with the object of plundering Dunbarc;<sup>1</sup> and it is strange that after a lapse of more than two thousand years, Drumcliff is still locally known for a trade in wickerwork carried on in the village. The Protestant Church now stands on the site of the ancient fane called *Tempul-boy*, the yellow church; to it was attached a college, frequented even by foreigners, who came from afar to imbibe knowledge at this celebrated school. The round tower of Drumcliff, the only one of which the county can boast, stands on the western side of the road. It is but 40 feet in height, an indifferent specimen of very rough rude masonry in irregular courses. On the east side, the lower step scarcely projects beyond the upper; but on the west there is a double plinth course, and each step projects ten inches. It was struck by lightning, A.D. 1396, when the wall was riven in three places. This information is given by O'Flaherty in a marginal note to a MS. in Trinity College, Dublin.<sup>2</sup> Some years ago a portion of the masonry was utilised for the completion of Drumcliff Bridge! The door is 8 feet above the ground, with a lintel stone 3 feet 6 inches in length; the top somewhat arched, but seemingly a natural, not an artificial formation.

On the east side of the road is the large sculptured cross of Drumcliff, a gem amongst antiquities. It is of hard sandstone, containing a large proportion of quartz, close grained and difficult to cut. The base appears unfinished; it is 13 feet high, 3 feet 8 inches wide at the cross arms, nearly a foot thick, tapering to two inches less at the top. On the east side there is at the bottom an interlaced ornament, above which stand the figures of Adam and Eve, divided by the tree, round which the serpent winds. Eve holds the apple in her right hand. The tree-branches form an interlaced ornament. Above the tree is a lion-like animal, carved in high relief, over which is a representation of David and Goliath. Over this is seen a figure of a man, with

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 160. Dunbarc was at that period in the possession of Ainle, son of *Lughaidh*, of the long hands. Curnan carried on the siege for a year and a half, at the expiration of which time he succeeded in slaying Ainle, his wife, and family. The name Dunbarc still exists in the Rosses, opposite Drumcliff, in the inlet formed by the sea A.M. 3790.—*MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

<sup>2</sup> H. 2, 11, "*Campanile '1' cloictēc ēpoma clīab fulmine destructum.*"



two animals erect on their hind legs, one at each side. The carving on the centre of the head of the cross is very much effaced, but appears to be the Last Judgment. On the west side an interlaced ornament is seen at the bottom, above which, a group of three figures, and standing above these, a strange animal is carved in high relief, over which again stand three figures. These are supposed to depict the seizure of Christ in the garden, and the Ecce Homo. Next above these, in the centre of the head of the cross, is the Crucifixion, in which appear both lance and sponge. The four portions of the circle connecting the arms are covered with interlaced designs, as also the rest of the cross.<sup>1</sup> This fine old cross, its plainer comrade or stone pillar, and the round tower, stand like three unwearied sentinels keeping protracted watch over the Church and "God's Acre," whilst the great world speeds for ever "down the ringing grooves of change." Behind, in the distance, rises Ben-Bulbin o'er-topping the scene, its

"Head,  
Conspicuous many a league, the mariner  
Bound homeward, and in hope already there,  
Greets with three cheers exulting."

Save these monuments, nothing remains to demonstrate the former prosperity of Drumcliff, but some trifling ruins at Ballynagalliagh or Nunstown, and also of old salt pans, situated on the seashore, a little to the west of the river's mouth.

Drumcliff was sometimes designated *Druim-cliabh na-g-cros*, Drumcliff of the crosses. In the Annals, under date 871, it is stated that Dunadhach, lord of Carbury, died; and after some encomiums bestowed on him as "Protector of the roaring shore" (a description perfectly applicable to the shore opposite Sligo bar), as celebrated for the number of his hostages, the religious champion of the sons of Conn, &c., it concludes—he "lies under hazel crosses in Drumcliff."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Notes on Irish Architecture," by Lord Dunraven. Vol. II.; pp. 47-8.

<sup>2</sup> The following obits, in connection with "St. Columbkille's Drumcliff," are recorded in the Annals: 921, the Abbot Maelpatrick died; 930, Abbot Maenghal, son of Becan died; 950, the Erenagh Flann, grandson of Becan died; 1029, the Erenagh Angus O'Hennessy was burnt to death (see *ante*, p. 88); 1053, the Erenagh Morogh O'Boland died; 1225, the

That the Anglo-Normans, though few in numbers, made rapid progress in conquest, can cause little surprise if it be borne in mind that the Irish chiefs were at constant feud and strife with each other. These feuds frequently ended in deliberately-planned assassinations. Shortly after the Meath forces had withdrawn from Sligo, Flaherty O'Muldorrey<sup>1</sup> induced Roderick O'Cananan, a chief of Tirconnell, who had occupied Drumcliff on the retirement of the invaders, to meet him in conference on the bridge of Sligo, where he, together with most of his party, were murdered in cold blood; therefore, even at this early date, it is evident there was a bridge across the river, though, probably, merely constructed of wood. A few months after this tragedy, the celebrated John de Courcy, with Anglo-Norman forces, accompanied by Irish allies, made an incursion into Connaught. The state of the province was not unfavourable for such an invasion, and it attracted knightly enterprise. De Courcy collected a small, but, in his judgment, a sufficient force, and marched, with more valour than circumspection, into a country where he expected a complete conquest, and but slight resistance. He was opposed by Conor Maenmhaigh, son of Roderick, King of Connaught, with his chiefs, joined by O'Brian, with a contingent from Munster.

De Courcy burned the churches which lay on the borders of the province, and continued his course in a westerly direction, but suddenly wheeled round, and with the intention of invading Ulster, marched on Ballysodare. He there learned that the Ulstermen were assembled, under Flaherty O'Muldorrey, at Drumcliff; and as the Connaught and Munster forces were following him closely, he burned Ballysodare, and made a rapid march across the Curlew mountains, fearing to be caught between the two hostile forces. He had barely time to escape.

Erenagh Auliffe O'Boland died; 1252, the Coarb Maelmaedhog O'Boland died; 1254, the Coarb Maelfinnen O'Boland died; 1330, the Coarb Maoilicsa O'Coinel died; 1362, the Coarb O'Boland died; 1416, the Coarb Maurice O'Coineoil was burnt by robbers in his own house; 1423, the Coarb O'Boland died; and in 1503 another O'Boland died also, a Coarb of Drumcliff.

<sup>1</sup> The O'Muldorrees were chiefs of Tirconnell prior to the O'Donnells, and are supposed to have been of the same sept.

His rear guard was overtaken, and attacked by the Connaughtmen in the defiles of the hills. Brave, confident in numbers, and encouraged by the weak appearance of the invader's force, charge succeeded charge, all calmly met; but although De Courcy succeeded in cutting his way through his opponents, he lost some of his bravest knights, and retired, foiled in his object. The country through which he passed met with little injury, owing to the rapidity with which he was obliged to move. By this event the Connaughtmen had the glory of compelling the retreat of their invader, and preserving inviolate the honour of the province.

Amongst all the warriors of that iron age of chivalry none stood higher than De Courcy for valour. His strength, far beyond the common, was joined to an iron constitution and a courage that scorned all odds. His life reads like a romance.

In 1189, Flaherty O'Muldorrey, encouraged by his bloodless success over De Courcy in the previous year, proceeded into Connaught with a large force, and took up a position in Corran. The Connaughtmen, with their Anglo-Norman allies, encamped opposite, and the two armies remained for some time watching each other; eventually they broke up, and returned home without coming to an engagement.

In 1196, Connolly O'Rorke, of Brefney, was slain by the men of Leyny at *Sliabh-da-en*,<sup>1</sup> now Slieve Dæane, a mountain, 900 feet in height, to the south of Lough Gill, on the borders of Tirerrill; it is a very prominent feature in the landscape as viewed from Sligo, and is the highest point of the range which extends from Lough Gill to Collooney. The popular and improbable legend connected with it runs thus:—

Two wild geese, on a wild-goose chase through the etherial regions of Ireland, for the purpose of sounding the depth of its lakes, descended into a lake on the north side of the mountain range in question, from this circumstance called *Loch-da-gheadh*, the lake of the two geese; the lake must have been deep, for the two geese never emerged from its waters, and hence, the mountain derived its name Slieve Dæane, the mountain of the two birds.<sup>2</sup> In all ages, and in many countries, birds have enjoyed

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, pp. 65 & 78.

<sup>2</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*



a supposed dominion as powers of the air. Perhaps their periodical movements or migrations gave rise to the legend; their comings and goings with the seasons; their alternate disappearance and reappearance being matters calculated to excite earnest attention in the minds of people who, perhaps, depended for part of their sustenance on the capture of these birds. This small lake may have been their favourite place of resort; for it is well known, from various authorities, that at certain seasons many parts of the country were, formerly, whitened with immense flights of wild geese and swans. If the migratory habits of wild fowl, and the myriads of aquatic birds which inhabit the latitudes of northern Europe, and in winter are driven southward by the severity of the weather, be taken into consideration, some idea may be formed of the multitude which hibernated formerly in Ireland, when swamps and forests covered the face of the kingdom—

“ — the free tenants of earth, air, and ocean,  
 Their forms all symmetry, their motions grace;  
 In plumage delicate and beautiful,  
 Thick without burthen, close as fishes' scales,  
 Or loose as full-blown poppies on the gale;  
 With wings that seem as they'd a soul within them,  
 They bear their owners with such sweet enchantment.”

Many places have been named from two birds; the natural explanation would be, that they were so called from being a favourite haunt of the two creatures thus commemorated; it is strange, however, that so many places should be named from two, in preference to any other number. Most such names have their origin in legends and superstitions, and the two beings are commonly represented as fairies, ghosts, or human beings transformed into strange, or animal shapes, by the spells of the Tuatha-de-Danans.<sup>1</sup>

On the death of Roderick O'Conor, in 1198, there was for some time a violent and bloody contention for the Provincial throne. Conor Maenmhaigh was elected, but almost immediately met his death at the hand of one of his own brothers, who, in turn, was slain by a son of his victim, and the province

<sup>1</sup> Joyce's "Irish Names of Places," p. 255.

was again plunged into commotion. At last, the vigour of Cathal O'Connor, son of Roderick, gained him the throne. He was of active, warlike disposition, and had already acquired renown by his personal prowess, which had obtained for him the title of *Crobhdearg*, or the bloody hand. But a vigorous and daring rival soon succeeded in concentrating all the heterogeneous elements of faction, and he found a certain way to supplant Cathal Crobhdearg. Cathal Carrach O'Connor addressed himself secretly to De Burgo, promised him the investiture of all the lands to which he laid claim, by grant from the English King, a claim to which, of course, Cathal Crobhdearg would not agree, and he thus secured De Burgo's powerful aid against the latter, who, surprised in his Court by the conspirators, was forced to secure his personal safety by flight. He took refuge with O'Neill, of Tyrone, whilst Cathal Carrach assumed the vacated dignity without a blow. A powerful confederation, however, was formed to redress a wrong which the native chiefs clearly perceived might similarly be their own lot next. O'Neill, who commanded this force, penetrated as far as Boyle, in Roscommon, and from thence returned, with Cathal Crobhdearg, into Tirerrill, which he ravaged; but a dispute, between the latter and his northern allies ended in a disruption of the confederation.

Cathal Crobhdearg advanced into West Connaught with the object of plunder, whilst O'Neill returned through Corran to Ballysodare. Cathal Carrach and De Burgo, hearing of the separation of the armies of their opponents, followed O'Neill, overtook his rear guard crossing the bridge of Ballysodare, and followed about a mile in pursuit to *Droichet-Martra*,<sup>1</sup> now Belladrihid, a small hamlet situated on a rivulet, where the

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Drehid Martra*, the Bridge of Martyrdom, or the Bridge of Slaughter. In an ancient poem, commemorating the deeds of Raghallach, a King of Connaught, the king's poet states that Drehid Martra was so called from a defeat inflicted by his lord on Ninde, Prince of Tirconnell, who, about the middle of the seventh century, invaded the western province—

“ The defeat of the flood we gave  
To Ninde and his shouting hosts;  
We changed the name of the cold cataract,  
From thenceforth it is called Martra.”

Northerners rallied, but were defeated with great loss. The fugitives were pursued as far as Drumcliff, and *Dun-Ui-Airmhedhaigh*, a fort situated north of that village, and to *Sail-Beinne*, which in the present day would be described as the shoulder of Ben-Bulbin mountain. O'Neill, who was with his rere guard when overtaken, took refuge in the Church of Ballysodare, where it would seem he was besieged, for the Annals relate that "he was not allowed to leave the Church of *Esdara* until he gave hostages and peace to Cathal Carrach."

The stream, on whose banks the battle took place, divides the present barony of Carbury from Tirerrill, and, also forms the boundary between the parishes of Ballysodare and Kilmacowen; it is sluggish of current, with muddy banks, and soft, dangerous bed. The ancient bridge, the scene of the contest, must have occupied nearly the same site as the present modern structure, now overlooked by the lofty girder railway viaduct.

By experience, aware of his inability to cope in the field with an English Baron so powerful as De Burgo, Cathal Crobhdearg adopted the expedient first devised by his rival, and entered into treaty with De Courcy and De Lacy, two Anglo-Norman Barons of great power, whom he prevailed on to assist him. The two armies, led by De Burgo on the one side, and on the other by De Courcy and De Lacy, soon met. These latter entered Connaught from the north, by way of Assaroe and Ballyshannon, thence through Carbury into Corran, and directed their course over the Curlew mountains towards the southern portion of the province; the English force on either side gave obstinacy to the combat; and it was after a struggle of some duration, contested with great valour, that at length De Burgo obtained a decided victory. Thus was Cathal Crobhdearg, seemingly, as far as ever from redress, and Cathal Carrach's usurpation, to all appearance, confirmed. This success was, however, but illusory. Cathal Crobhdearg, with much address, detached De Burgo from his rival's interest, and persuaded him to declare in his favour against the rival he had so recently set up in opposition. Cathal Carrach, unprepared for this formidable emergency, fell, overpowered by numbers, and Cathal Crobhdearg was restored by De Burgo; but this rivalry amongst the O'Conors engendered so much dissension that the province



remained for years in a very unsettled state, neighbouring chiefs espousing opposite sides.

Thus, in 1207, Cathal Carrach Mac Dermot ravaged Tirerrill, and crossing the Curlews, attacked Cormac Mac Dermot, and O'Flynn, of Assylin,<sup>1</sup> near Boyle; but a party, led by Dermot, and Cormac O'Connor, Conor Got<sup>2</sup> O'Hara, chief of Leyny, and Donogh O'Dowd, chief of Tireragh, started in pursuit. The Brefnians, who were with MacDermot, perceiving themselves greatly outnumbered, fled. MacDermot's own immediate followers, stood firm, but too few in number to be of any avail, were speedily routed. MacDermot was taken prisoner, and his eyes were put out by his savage conquerors.

The rivalries of the Anglo-Norman Barons, more prevalent in Connaught, where the power of the De Burgo family was greatest, and where there was least counterbalance of powerful Irish chiefs than elsewhere, their cruel exactions, together with the no less cruel reprisals of the natives, brought over King John from England, with a numerous army, in 1210. The mere fact of his arrival sufficed to secure order for a time. Twenty of the principal Irish chiefs did homage to the English Crown, amongst whom was Cathal Crobhdearg. He consented to surrender to King John two-thirds of Connaught, and pay one hundred marks annually for the remainder, which he was to hold as vassal of the Crown.<sup>3</sup> John demanded from him his son as hostage, but to this O'Connor declined to agree; he, however, surrendered as substitutes, Dermot MacDermot, chief of Moylurg; Conor Got O'Hara, chief of Leyny; Finn O'Carmacan, one of his household; and Torven Gall-Gael, one of his military commanders.

During his stay in Ireland, John seems to have laudably devoted himself to the improvement of the civil administration of the kingdom; and during the remainder of the reign of that unfortunate king, so marked by disorder and degradation both in England and on the Continent, Ireland remained peaceful. Having regulated the affairs of the country, John departed, taking O'Connor's hostages in his train, to England. They were all allowed to return to Connaught in the following year, at which time (1211) Roderick O'Connor was slain by the men of

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Got, *i.e.*, the Stammerer.

<sup>3</sup> Leland.

Leyny. Contentions continued amongst the O'Conors, for in 1212 Dermot O'Conor captured the fortified residence of Hugh O'Conor, at *Killcolman-Finn*, in Corran, and burnt thirty-five of the garrison, with the building. This fortified house or castle would appear to have been in the parish of Kilcolman, barony of Coolavin, but O'Donovan considered the locality was Kilcolman, near Ballyhadereen, in the barony of Costello, County of Mayo, distant at least nine miles from the nearest boundary of the present barony of Corran, County of Sligo. Under the protection of the Crown, the remainder of Cathal Crobhdeargh O'Conor's career presents no further incident of interest. He seems to have been allowed to continue in peaceful possession of his remaining rights until his death. Previous to this event, an incident occurred in 1213 which demonstrates that the collection of rent was not unaccompanied with personal danger, even at that early date; and a bailiff in days of old had seemingly quite as uncomfortable a post as in these more highly civilized and enlightened times. Finn O'Brollaghan, steward to O'Donnell, chief of Tirconnell, was sent into Connaught to collect the tribute or rent due to his chief. Unfortunately, his first visit on entering Carbury was to the residence of Murray O'Daly, of Lissadill. It thus appears that O'Donnell had extended his rule, or at least claimed sway, over Northern Carbury. O'Daly was a poet, and in that capacity imagined his calling should exempt him from all payments. Brollaghan's courage was not strengthened by perceiving that the poet was of determined physiognomy and gigantic stature, and suddenly remembering O'Donnell's warning to be careful in his bearing towards O'Daly when asking for tribute, he showed signs of trepidation. The mere presence, however, of the bailiff had sufficed to rouse the anger of the poet, who seized an axe, and with one stroke prevented the possibility of any repetition of the obnoxious demand. Dreading consequent vengeance, O'Daly then fled to Clanricard, but O'Donnell pursued the poet from place to place as far as Limerick, and finally compelled the bard to take refuge in Scotland. In this last asylum he composed three poems in praise of O'Donnell, and prayed for peace and pardon. In excuse for the deed, O'Daly said that the cause of enmity was trifling; he

had killed only a plebeian of O'Donnell's people, who had the audacity to affront him :—

“ Small is our difference with the man,  
A shepherd was abusing me,  
And I killed the clown.  
O God ! is that a cause of enmity ? ”

The laudatory verses so moved O'Donnell that he forgave O'Daly, and even restored his lands and possessions. It is almost impossible to conceive the degree of power attained in early days by bards in Ireland ; their pen was a more formidable weapon than the sword of many princes, so great was the dread of being satirised by them. From their undue power in the state, the bards excited the jealousy and enmity of some of the kings and princes ; they were proscribed and expelled from many districts, in the century preceding the Christian era ; and but for the advice given by St. Columbkille to the National Assembly that sat at Drumkeath, A.D. 575, “ these licensed liars ” would not have been “ still permitted to exist and spin out the fabulous additions which give an apocryphal tone to our traditions.”<sup>1</sup>

At various intervals the bards of Ireland were proscribed. The Acts against minstrels were so stringent in the reign of Henry VIII. and Queen Mary, that “ the charms of song were ennobled with the glories of martyrdom.” Their biting wit and their invectives exceeded all bounds, so that “ whilst the harp was honourably hung in the quarterings of England, the unhappy harpers were both hung and quartered in Ireland.” Lissadill, the scene of the murder committed by the poet, is by the Four Masters written *Lios-an-doill*, the fort of the blind man. At the time of the Ordnance Survey, 1836, it was by the Irish-speaking people frequently called *Lis-cor-na-g-ceard*, the hill-fort of the artificer. The townland of Lissadill comprises nearly 650 acres ; on it is now the handsome residence of Sir Henry Gore Booth, Bart. There are four raths, the largest of them situated in a plantation to the north-east of the mansion, is probably the “ Blind Man's Fort.” Remains of a castle may

<sup>1</sup> Will's “ Irish Nation,” Vol. i., p. 125.



be seen close to the shore, near the western extremity of the townland.

In 1214, Ualgarg O'Rorke, chief of Brefney, plundered the territory of Phillip MacCostello, in *Crich-Cairpre*, the present barony of Carbury, and carried off great spoil of cattle. From this it appears that the MacCostellos had driven the O'Dowds out of Carbury, so that the territory of the latter was now confined solely to Tireragh and Tirawley. Apparently Sligo, after this date, must have enjoyed rest during more than ten years, for no mention is made of pillaging incursions by either English or Irish; and thus Cathal Crobhdearg O'Conor, King of Connaught, when he died in 1224, had enjoyed some years of well-earned peace. The "Annals of Lough Key" contain a long panegyric on his character for munificence and other notable qualities, and it is stated that in his time *tithes* were first levied in Ireland. The chief distinctions between the Western and the Irish Church have already been briefly noted. It may be well to give a summary of the decrees passed by the Synod, held at Cashel in 1172, by order of Henry II. (in pursuance of his promise to the Pope), for the reformation of *abuses* and *religion*. That no marriage should be contracted which was prohibited by the Church; that infants should be catechised before the doors of the churches, and baptised in the baptismal churches; that the faithful should all pay tithe of animals, of corn, and other produce, and ecclesiastical property was freed from all taxation; ecclesiastical districts were exempted from the customary exactions in the way of hospitality and other contributions. This reformation was merely nominal; it seems to have had little effect on the people, who still married within the prohibited degrees, still refused to pay tithes, and still groaned under the exaction of *Coign* and *Coshering*. The main objects of these decrees were the exemption of ecclesiastical property from the demands to which other property was liable, and the enforcement of the payment of tithes which had never before been exacted in Ireland. An entry in the "Annals of Lough Key" seems to prove that marriage amongst the clergy was still general; for in an entry in A.D. 1224, it is stated that "Maelisa, son of Bishop O'Mullover, parson (*persún*) of" Tireragh and Tirawley, and designed for the episcopal dignity, was killed by

the son of Donogh O'Dowd, he being at the time his guest.<sup>1</sup>

On the death of Cathal Crobhdearg O'Connor, his son, Torlogh, was elected by the people, but immediately deposed by the Lord Justice, and a brother named Hugh raised in his stead. Hugh, driven away by his subjects, repaired to Athlone to seek assistance from the English. As both he and his father had been tributary, aid was at once granted, and he advanced towards North Connaught with a large body of English allies. The inhabitants of the plains of Boyle and of the eastern parts of Roscommon fled with their flocks and herds into Leyny and Tirawley, but the goods of all who took refuge in these districts were appropriated by O'Dowd. Torlogh O'Connor, who had previously expelled Hugh, abandoned by his followers, left with only a few personal retainers and undisciplined recruits, yet by skilful dispositions managed, with his small but faithful band, to effect an orderly retreat into the County of Sligo, pursued by Hugh O'Connor and the English, who for three days ravaged Leyny; then O'Hara, who had espoused the cause of Torlogh O'Connor, made peace in order to save his territory from utter destruction.

Torlogh O'Connor was encamped near Lough *Mic-Oiredhaigh*, in the present County of Sligo.<sup>2</sup> This was considered by O'Donovan to be the ancient name of the lake of Templehouse. Hugh and the English, not caring to pursue foes who could easily elude attack, devastated the country, and went on a marauding expedition into Mayo, in search of the flocks and herds which had been driven westward. The war in South and North Connaught continued during the entire year—in short, until utter exhaustion brought repose. The Annals paint a deplorable picture: "This was a necessary tranquillity, for

<sup>1</sup> maeltru mac in erpuic i maelif agmar, peppán. h. fiaárpach ocur. h n-analgaró ocur aoban erpuic, do marbat do mac Donnchara i tubba, ar gcaitein a bíó ocur a tēimró na tigh fein.—Annala locha cé. Vol. i., p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> "Annals of Lough Cé," edited by W. M. Hennessy, Vol. ii., p. 573. It is also written Loch-mic-Airedhaigh, *recte* Loch-mic-Feradhaigh; O'Donovan writes it Lough MacFarry. It is previously mentioned in the "Four Masters" in the year 1183, where they state that Bec O'Hara, lord of Leyny, was treacherously slain by Conor O'Dermot in his residence on Lough Mac Fereadaidh.

there was not a church or territory in Connaught on that day without being destroyed." The indiscriminate slaughter of herds and human beings, the exposure of the wretched population to the inclemency of the weather and to starvation, brought their inevitable results—the outbreak of a terrible plague or fever, most fatal in its attacks, so that "the towns used to be emptied, without a living man being left in them." Famine and starvation thinned the population periodically, but when fever or any epidemic was superadded, entire villages were carried off. The law of the survival of the fittest was allowed full scope; even in prosperous years children from their birth upwards were fearfully neglected; women did nearly all the hard work, were mere beasts of burden; a man who could claim a relationship, however remote, to the chief of the sept would not condescend to manual labour. Thus crops of all kinds were thin and poor, frequently did not ripen, and had to be cut down green and grainless, owing to want of skill in husbandry, poverty of soil, or coldness of the season. In Connaught, civil commotions and forcible usurpation prevailed to a greater degree than in the other provinces of Ireland; in Connaught the De Burgo family was paramount, and there existed little counter-balance of any native or other power. It was found that the greatest check to private aggressions existed wherever both English and native chiefs were numerous, and the balance of power, therefore, more equally preserved.

In 1226 Fergal O'Teige, chief (*dux*) of the household of Hugh O'Connor, was slain by Donslieve O'Gara, chief of Slieve Lugh, *i.e.*, that part of the barony of Costello included in the Diocese of Achonry. Vengeance followed quickly on this murder, for the following year O'Gara was killed by his nephew Giolla Roe (literally "the red fellow"), who took his residence by night assault; Giolla Roe was put to death in the same castle by order of Hugh O'Connor; a train of occurrences that recalls to mind the sequence of events in the "House that Jack built," all fitly wound up afterwards, by the murder in 1228, of Hugh O'Connor, who, having been driven into Ulster was, on his return, attacked at a place called *Gortin-cowle-luacha* (the field of the rushy corner). He was captured, together with his wife, his flocks and herds, and delivered over to the English, with whom he was



then at feud. In a fit of jealousy he was stabbed by an English captain in the mansion of Geoffrey Marisco, Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. On the murder of Hugh O'Connor, a civil war raged for the sovereignty of Connaught, then but a nominal dignity, as the English had pretty firmly established a certain amount of authority in the province. The contention was between Hugh and Torlogh, the two sons of Roderick O'Connor; and the entire district south of Ballysodare, stretching to the Moy, was laid waste. The natural consequences followed, excessive dearth prevailed, numbers perished by cold and famine, the churches and their revenues were plundered, so that there was an exodus of "clergy and learned men." These commotions continued till the close of 1230, a period of two years, when in the autumn of this latter year an army of English, with their Irish auxiliaries, after subduing the southern portion of the province, proceeded leisurely northwards through Leyny, Kesh Corran, and thence over the Curlew mountains, for the purpose of deposing Hugh O'Connor, and setting up in his stead Felim, son of Cathal Crobhdearg. The Irish drove their flocks and herds into distant and secure fortresses, and would not meet the English in the open, but remained concealed in the large forests of the Curlew range. MacGeraghty, one of the chiefs, not being content with these tactics, accompanied the march of the English column at some distance, but in parallel line, until he reached *Finn-charn*,<sup>1</sup> one of the summits of the Curlew range. Here he made his attack, placing himself on the summit of the Cairn to view the conflict, which was of short duration; in a few minutes his small party was entirely surrounded, and MacGeraghty died fighting valiantly, covered with wounds, and pierced by five arrows. Hugh O'Connor who, with his party, was concealed from view to the east of the English by the intervening forest, was unaware of this foolhardy adventure until the arrival of fugitives warned him of his peril, and also betrayed his position to the English. By great bravery and coolness he effected his escape. An archer, taking deliberate aim at him, was transfixed by the javelin he held in his hand at the moment.

The result of this skirmish was to compel Hugh O'Connor to take refuge in Tyrone with O'Neill, and Felim O'Connor's authority

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 96.

for the time remained undisputed. He gained his precarious position principally through the influence of De Burgo, who, unwilling to raise the suspicions of the king of England by seizing the power himself, thought to work out his intrigue through Felim, whom he looked upon as a mere instrument in his hands, by the use of whose name and authority he could mask his real designs. But Felim possessed spirit and sagacity; he reckoned as a point in his own favour on the troubles in which the turbulent ambition of his supporter had already involved him, and resisted the unjust and oppressive demands of De Burgo; the latter therefore marched against him, made him prisoner, and in his stead placed his cousin, Hugh O'Connor, over the province. Felim was fortunate enough to escape from confinement in 1233, proceeded to reassert his authority in Connaught, established his camp at *Druim-Gregraidhe*, in the barony of Boyle, not far from the shores of Lough Gara, and was there joined by MacDermot. Finally, the forces of his opponent were totally defeated, Hugh O'Connor being slain, and at his death the descendants of Roderick, king of Ireland, became extinct in the male line. The Pope had granted the kingdom of Ireland to Roderick and his descendants, provided he contented himself with having *six wives*, "and, as he did not accept, God took kingship and sovereignty from his seed for ever."<sup>1</sup>

In 1235, the English, under the command of De Burgo, pillaged all the southern part of Connaught, and compelled Felim to take refuge with O'Donnell in Ulster; they then advanced to Ballysodare, laid waste the surrounding district, and seized large herds belonging to O'Donnell, as punishment for the asylum afforded to O'Connor; the force then crossed the Curlew mountains with the object of besieging the fortress of MacDermot on Lough Key.<sup>2</sup> About this time De Burgo fell into disfavour,

<sup>1</sup> *Uair taruair an papa cept an epinn dó fein ocu ródá fíol na diatú go brát, ocu ríirren do mnaib póroa, ocu ríur do pecat na mban o rin amac; ocu nír gab Ruairíu rin.*—*Annála Locha cé*. Vol. i., p. 314.

<sup>2</sup> For a most interesting account of the siege of this island fortress, see "Annals of Lough Key," Vol. i., pp. 329-331. An extract is here given as illustrative of the superiority in military appliances of the Anglo-Normans at this period—

"A fleet came then, also, with implements and engines to the lake, and

and Felim made a pathetic and forcible appeal to the king, in which he set forth his wrongs, and the injustice and rapacity of the disgraced Baron. He was given for his support the "king's five cantreds," out of which he received rents and customs. His ally, Cormac MacDermot, was included in the pacification.

In 1236 Felim O'Connor was summoned by the Lord Justice to meet him near Athlone; but, forewarned that treachery was intended, Felim departed from the assembly, and, attended by a few horsemen, fled for protection to O'Donnell, pursued as far as the bridge of Sligo. The English then pillaged the territory near Sligo, and retired with their spoils to *Druim Gregraidhe*,<sup>1</sup> where the Lord Justice, Maurice Fitzgerald, lay encamped; and after appointing Brian O'Connor, in the place of Felim, to the government of the country, the camp was broken up. Felim returned to Connaught, but his followers dispersed in pursuit of cattle, and Brian O'Connor fell upon his small retinue, but was repulsed. These contentions left the country exposed to famine; the sufferings of the people being aggravated by the extreme inclemency of the weather. Ecclesiastics lived in daily terror of wild marauders, who paid no regard to church or sanctuary. The rumour of a defeat, or the approach of a hostile expedition,

an engine was raised by them on a small earthen wall, and many stones were projected truly, from this engine into the rock. And as they were not able to accomplish anything against it in this way, the Foreigners made several boats of the houses of Ardcarua, and brought with them the ignitable materials of the district that a flame might be enkindled by them, and they tied empty tuns round this ram to keep it afloat on the water; and they sailed a large vessel, surmounted by a house of boards, to tow this ram to the Rock to burn it by this means. The people who were in it (the Rock) were seized with fear at these stratagems, and they came out of it on parole and conditions."

The departure of the army did not leave peace in the country, but the Irish themselves robbed and killed one another, contending about the residue which had been spared by the troops. In the year previous, 1234, Hugh O'Hara, chief of Leyny, was killed by Donagh O'Hara; his dwelling was set on fire at night, and he was speared whilst endeavouring to escape. In this case Donogh O'Hara could offer some justification, for he sought to avenge the *death* of one brother, the *blinding* of another brother, and the slaughter of *five* first cousins. "The Annals of Boyle," state that Donogh O'Hara was brother of Hugh O'Hara.

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 187.



whether Irish or English, produced a headlong flight of the population to the nearest church or monastery, so that these buildings became places of refuge, to the discomfort and great expense of the priesthood. This lamentable disruption of society had continued more or less during a period of twelve years, from the expedition of O'Neill into Connaught in 1225. One year a district was plundered by the Irish; the next by the English; neither party strong enough to gain the supremacy; the English, however, ever sufficiently so, to devastate any territory invaded by them; "the king and royal heirs of Connaught pillaging and profaning territories and churches after them," gleaning the booty spared by the Saxon. This is no fancy picture, but one transcribed almost *verbatim* from contemporaneous Annals. Towards the close of the year Felim O'Connor gained a victory over his adversaries at the battle of *Cluain-catha* (now Battlefield),<sup>1</sup> in the parish of Toomour, barony of Corran, about four miles southward of Ballymote.

In 1237 Felim, joined by the chiefs of Leitrim and Cavan, proceeded against his rival, Brian O'Connor, with a large force. He crossed the Curlew mountains, and on reaching Drumrat,<sup>2</sup> in the barony of Corran, found the forces of Brian O'Connor, together with English troops, drawn up in battle array. Felim ordered his men neither to draw bow, nor cast javelin, till they arrived at close quarters: accordingly they stooped their heads (which at that period were generally, in the case of infantry soldiers, surmounted by a conical steel cap), and rushed furiously on the steady array of their adversaries. The English, unable to sustain the shock of greatly superior numbers, were driven back in confusion on the main body, which consisted of Brian O'Connor's followers, who, instead of coming to their aid, immediately broke, dispersed, and fled without the loss of a man. Felim O'Connor, unopposed, ravaged the barony of Tirerrill, part of which was the patrimony of Conor MacDermot, who had espoused the cause of his rival. Felim then succeeded in making peace with the English, and five cantreds,<sup>3</sup> the cus-

<sup>1</sup> The Seat of the Knott family. The townland contains 644 acres, with one rath.

<sup>2</sup> *Druim-raithe*.

<sup>3</sup> A cantred is supposed to have contained 100 townlands.

tomary private patrimony of the kings of Connaught were, according to the Four Masters, given him free from cattle tribute, or rent. In 1235, as already mentioned, a similar grant is stated to have been made. The record of this event may be but a repetition of the former statement, unless the events of 1236 led to the revocation of the previous grant. According to the Annals of Clonmacnoise, Felim was deprived of "the king's five cantreds" by the Lord Deputy, who conferred them on his rival Brian. Felim did not obtain the grant, "free from cattle tribute or rent," for it appears, from an entry on a great roll of the pipe, that in 1262, "Ffethelrun O'Konechor" owed 500 marks, and 2,000 cows, for land held of the king in Connaught. He was allowed, however, to enjoy the remnant of his territory without further molestation, and his gratitude was shown by loyal service, for in 1244 he, with his followers, accompanied the Irish forces against the Welsh. His life calls for no further remark; it had been a succession of struggles in which his energy, courage, and sagacity were unremittingly employed to maintain possession of the residue of his ancestral claims.

Taking advantage of the constant strife in the province amongst the petty chiefs, and clearly perceiving that Ireland's difficulty was England's opportunity, "the Barons of Erin came into Connaught, and commenced to build castles in it." The native chiefs were too much occupied by their own rancorous feuds to oppose any effectual opposition. Two examples will suffice. In 1234, as already narrated, Donogh O'Hara, chief of Leyny, had terminated a series of outrages by the murder of his brother Hugh; retribution now overtook him; he was taken prisoner by Teige O'Connor, who handed him over to the custody of his nephews, sons of the murdered Hugh; they slew him between Elphin and Jamestown, on the road to O'Beirne's country, where he was to have been confined. Again, Mulrooney O'Dowd, another Sligo chief, was slain by Melaghlin O'Connor and his friends. These occurrences are but typical of what took place in every district of the province. The English Barons were thus enabled to erect numerous castles without opposition in Mayo, and they gradually advanced towards Sligo. In 1239 the Lord Justice, Maurice Fitzgerald, overran O'Donnell's Con-

naught possessions as far as Drumcliff, Fitzgerald himself taking up his quarters at Ballysodare.

O'Donnell died the year following (1240), and in the notice of his death it is stated he was Lord of Lower Connaught as far as the Curlew mountains. After O'Donnell's death, Fitzgerald seated himself securely in Sligo. In 1242 he presented the "Hospital of Sligo" to Clarus MacMailin, and dedicated it to the Trinity. Despite wars and tumults, ecclesiastical communities seem to have sometimes thriven, for two years previously, Lasarina, daughter of Cathal Crobhdearg O'Connor, and wife of O'Donnell, gave the half-bally of *Ros-Birn*, now Rossbourne, in the parish of Kilmacowen, barony of Carbury, in trust to the same abbot. Parts of the barony belonged at this period to O'Donnell, who may have given this and other lands in its vicinity as a *tinscra*, or dowry, to his wife, according to old Irish custom. Rossbourne, according to the Down Survey,<sup>1</sup> was situated near the Ballysodare river, is described as abbey land, containing 135a. Or. 32p., and was granted *circum*. 1655 to the Earl of Strafford. It is casually mentioned in the Survey of 1633-6, where it is stated that the quarterland of "Carrownohince" lies on the seashore "betwixt the Ross and Larisse," or Strandhill. In 1245, to secure himself more effectually in his new possessions, Fitzgerald erected a castle in Sligo. Felim O'Connor had been ordered to build it at his own expense, but seems to have been unable to comply with the command.

Taking advantage of the military denudation occasioned by the Welsh expedition, in which Felim had joined, Malachy O'Donnell marched into Sligo, and carried away cattle and other property. Probably, to avenge this raid, Fitzgerald invaded Tirconnell, which he appears to have subdued, for he gave half the principality to Cormac O'Connor, and received hostages from O'Donnell for the other moiety. The hostages were sent for safe-keeping to the castle of Sligo. After Fitzgerald's departure, O'Donnell invaded Sligo, and captured and burnt the outworks of the castle, but failed to make himself master of the mainwork. The garrison hanged his hostages from the battlements in his sight, amongst them being his tutor, and his foster-brother.

<sup>1</sup> Fol. 82 ; A. \* 2.



O'Donnell, discomfited, returned to his own country.<sup>1</sup> The next year (1247) Fitzgerald, having encamped his forces around the castle of Sligo, advanced on Ballyshannon, where he overthrew and slew O'Donnell; but during his absence, disturbances broke out, and some English districts were plundered. O'Dowd, of Tireragh, who had taken refuge in Donegal, sailed with a fleet from thence, in order to make a diversion in his rere, and to plunder Carbury, which was then in the possession of the English. The expedition seems to have collapsed after the shipwreck of one of the vessels on *Inis Tuathfrais*, an island somewhere off the Sligo coast.<sup>2</sup> O'Donovan and Connellan conjectured it to be the Rosses in Donegal; if so, the ship was lost, before the coast of Tirconnell had been cleared.

De Burgo, in 1248, erected a castle in Corran (the name is, unfortunately, not given), on the death of Faghaitach O'Devlin, a chief of the district. He probably availed himself of the disputes which almost invariably arose after the death of a chief.

In 1249, Pierce Poer and David Drew, with a detachment of English, under Bermingham, when proceeding to reinforce the garrison of Sligo Castle, fell into an ambuscade laid for them by a son of Felim O'Conor; most of the party were slain; their bodies conveyed to Ballysodare, and there buried. The unsteady, yielding footing of the morass, the mazy intricacy of the thickets, all afforded to the brave, but badly armed Irish, advantages more than commensurate with the arms and discipline of their enemy. After this success, O'Conor penetrated into Tireragh, which he pillaged as far as the Moy. It is quite

<sup>1</sup> In 1246 a whale came ashore in *Cuil-irra*, which "brought great prosperity and joy to the entire country."

<sup>2</sup> W. H. Hennessy, notes to Annals of Lough Key. His words are as follows—"Inis Tuathfrais. The island of Tuathfrais. The name is written *inri tuat parr*, by the Four Masters. The difference between this form and that in the text (Annals of Lough Key) being attributable to the omission, by the Four Masters, of the letter *r*, which, although not marked in the text with the aspirate sign (*ř*), should be aspirated according to the ordinary grammatical rules. Dr. O'Donovan was, probably, in error in identifying (Four Masters, A.D. 1247, note v.) Tuathrass, or Tuathfrais, with the district of the Rosses in Donegal. But the examination of the evidences on the subject would occupy too much space here."

evident the O'Dowds must have been driven from this part of their patrimony, for it is now mentioned as a possession of the Berminghams. Garret Bermingham pursued the marauding party, wounded and captured Donogh O'Connor, whom he conveyed prisoner to *Dun-Contreatain*, now Donaghintraine, situated on the coast, in the parish of Templeboy, barony of Tireragh. Being reinforced, the Irish again attacked Bermingham, who fell in the engagement, and Donogh O'Connor was rescued, but died of his wounds. Fitzgerald proceeded to the scene of the disturbance, and recaptured the booty, the Irish retreating into Leitrim, and from thence to the north. He then occupied Sligo with a considerable force; but no sooner had he retired, than O'Donnell overran and plundered the country from the Curlew mountains to the river Moy. Donaghintraine is written *Dun Cinntréatáin* and *Dun Contreáin*, by Giolla Iosa More MacFirbis,<sup>1</sup> who, *circum* 1417, thus alludes to it—

Dún Contreáin, na tonn n-geal  
 Apur ana fúth fín-fleo,  
 Inao caithmí h-l Chuino cneáio  
 An fáitche an fuino fóro-leáin.

“ In days of yore, based on the mountain's steep,  
 Donaghintraine o'erhung the billows deep;  
 Without—fair, verdant valleys smiled around;  
 Within—bright rosy wine the banquet crowned.”

The first of the above forms of the name evidently means the dun or fort at the head of the sea. The second signifies Cu-Treathain's fort, Cu-Treathain being the name of a man, signifying the hero of the sea. The name is now much obscured under its anglicised form.<sup>2</sup> On the old map of the coast (A.D. 1609) already referred to, this place is written Duncantroghan, and is shown as a castle, situated nearly midway between “ Rosslee ” and “ Aughres.”

In 1250 Felim O'Connor returned from the north, where he had taken refuge after his son's attack on the English detachment. Invading Sligo from the side of Leitrim, he swept the entire county of cattle, which he drove northward over the Curlew mountains; but he managed at length to make peace with the Lord Justice.

<sup>1</sup> Hy-Fiachrach, p. 283.

<sup>2</sup> O. M., s. 12.



Fitzgerald had probably made large encroachments on the territories of the Irish chiefs in Leyny, for in 1251 Dermot O'Hara, lord of that district, died whilst in confinement in one of his castles.

The heat of the summer of 1252 was so intense that some of the largest rivers ran dry, and many forests were set on fire by the heat. It is, however, more probable that fires carelessly lighted may have ignited the dried undergrowth, and occasioned conflagrations such as often occur in the backwoods of America from a like cause. When peat is cut away to a sufficient depth, roots of oak, birch, and fir are found on the sub-stratum of gravel, clay, or marl. Many of the trees bear traces of having been injured by fire, some of the trunks being reduced to charcoal.<sup>1</sup> These trunks lying on the earth arrested the drainage, confined the waters to the present area of the bogs, and produced a constantly-growing mass of peat. This, of course, does not account for the formation of all swamps; in some instances the waters may have collected in woods where the outlet was impeded by falling leaves and branches, that first formed a kind of moss, and afterwards in time assumed its present appearance, the trees decaying through excess of moisture at the roots.

In 1253, Maurice Fitzgerald erected the monastery, or abbey, of Sligo, which he dedicated to the cross, and presented it to the Dominicans, together with land for a cemetery and garden. The cemetery formerly extended from the abbey along the river, and comprised the space between the present Imperial Hotel and the upper weir on the river. In some excavations made in 1880, along the roadway cart-loads of human bones were disinterred. According to the "Annals of the Four Masters," the edifice erected by Fitzgerald was consumed in 1415 by fire, occasioned by the careless use of a candle. A curious extract, taken from a work published in 1791, relating to Sligo Abbey, corroborates this: "This misfortune being represented to Pope John XXIII., then present at the Council of Constance, he issued the following Apostolic letters:—

"John, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to all Christian believers who shall see these present letters, salvation and apostolic benediction. It having been represented unto us

<sup>1</sup> Statistical Account of the Parish of Kilmacteige, p. 351.



that the church and house of Dominicans at Sligo, in the Diocese of Elphin, in which it is affirmed twenty brethren have devoutly served God, were lately burned by fire, and that the friar and some of the brethren of the Order desire to restore said church and house, a wish of considerable expense, the means to defray which they do not possess, we, consulting the honour of said church, and willing that it should be repaired, that the faithful may resort thither more freely for devotion, and be desirous to contribute more largely towards its repairs when they find themselves replenished with spiritual gifts; relying, as we do, on the mercy of the omnipotent God, and by the authority of His blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, do compassionately relax ten years and as many forty days of penance (*decum annos et totidam quadragenas*) enjoined on all penitents and those who have confessed, who, on the Feasts of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Patrick, shall devoutly visit the aforesaid church and contribute to its repairs. Our will is, that if there is any indulgence, either for ever or a certain time, granted by us to those who shall visit or assist in repairing said church and house, that it will henceforth be null and void.

“‘Dated at Constance, the 16th day of the Calendar of February, in the fifth year of our Pontificate. A.D. 1415.’”

The ruins of the spacious and beautiful monastery of Sligo evince its former splendour. Of the cloisters, three sides may still be seen, covered with an arched roof; arches and pillars are of good workmanship, some of them ornamented with sculpture. The east window is fine, and the high altar adorned with relieves. The nave is spacious, and there is a passage round it, in the nature of a gallery, supported by pillars at a distance of about three feet from each other. Looking towards the altar, the tomb of O'Connor, with the effigies of himself and wife, can be seen in the right-hand corner. There are several vaults and cells. The central tower is perfect, having been renovated in 1879. This interesting monument of antiquity seems to have suffered as much from the destructive hand of time as from man. Popular tradition assigns its destruction to Cromwell, who, however, never was within many miles of the abbey. It was burnt some years before his arrival in Ireland, by Sir Frederick Hamilton, 22nd August, 1642.

The monks of old appear to have had a fine perception of the beautiful in art; this point must be conceded by all who gaze at Sligo Abbey, a venerable relic of religious enthusiasm. It is regrettable that in modern ecclesiastical architecture in Ireland, especially during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, so little attention should have been given to the principles of form and proportion, upon which beauty and symmetry were considered to depend in past ages, when buildings arose whose remains still continue to afford pleasure to the eye of cultivated taste. Happily, barn-like architecture no longer meets approval, and churches and buildings of various kinds are rising throughout the land, with outlines that alike please the eye and beautify the landscape.

The county still continued in a disturbed state. In 1256, Roderick O'Gara, chief of *Sliabh Lugha*, was treacherously slain by his own gossip,<sup>1</sup> David Cushen, who also partly demolished his castle. To avenge the death of O'Gara, Hugh, son of Felim O'Conor, chief of Connaught, plundered the lands of David Cushen, recaptured the castle, and put the garrison to the sword; then razed the building, and took possession of all the islands on Lough Gara. Shortly after this occurrence, Walter De Burgo raised a large force, with the object of devastating Corran, and lay nearly a week encamped at Achonry.<sup>2</sup> He plundered all the churches of the district, and sent messengers desiring the O'Reillys of Cavan to meet him; but they failed to observe the appointment, and De Burgo, thus disappointed, returned home. Thomas O'Miachan, Bishop of Achonry, whose churches had been despoiled and his diocese pillaged, being unable with carnal weapons to withstand the marauder, cursed him with bell, book, and candle, whereupon a notable miracle occurred. It is stated that it became as gloomy in the open as in the midst of the thick woods,<sup>3</sup> showing by this comparison

<sup>1</sup> A person standing sponsor to the child of another was called *gossip* of the child's father, from *God-sib*, i.e., God related; hence comes gossip. By the Irish it was considered a very close bond of union or relationship.

<sup>2</sup> *Achadh-Conaire*.

<sup>3</sup> The Irish sentence reads literally: "And the Bishop O'Miachan was drowning their candles about nones, when it was equally dark in field and wood."

how numerous the forests yet were. It would be a curious coincidence could it be shown that an eclipse of the sun had occurred in that year, as such an event would fully account for the unnatural darkness.

In 1257, Geoffry O'Donnell, chief of Tirconnell, marched on Sligo, took it by surprise, slew some of the English, and burned the town. The annalists apply the term *sradbhaile* to designate this latter; the word properly signifies a village or town not defended by an enclosure or wall, and consisting of *one* street. The term is composed of *srad*, a street, and *bhaile*, a village or town. Many readers must be familiar with the appearance of Irish villages, which consist of a long straggling line of cabins on either side of the highway, with, generally speaking, no lines of houses crossing at right angles. The term is good word-painting.

O'Donnell carried off his spoils towards Upper Carbury, but was pursued and overtaken at Credran-Columbkille, in the Rosses,<sup>1</sup> by Maurice Fitzgerald, who marshalled his forces for attack.

“ The Saxon hath gathered on Credran’s far heights  
His groves of long lances, the flower of his knights,  
His awful cross-bowmen, whose long iron hail  
Finds through *cota*<sup>2</sup> and *sciath*<sup>2</sup> the bare heart of the Gael.”

The combat was long and well contested. Donogh O'Donnell fell in the thick of the *mêlée*; Griffin, one of Fitzgerald's knights was unhorsed and taken prisoner. Victory, for a time trembling in the balance, at length declared for O'Donnell. In vain Fitzgerald attempted to rally his wavering followers. He and O'Donnell met hand to hand, as, “grim, savage, and gory,” he covered the retreat of his force from the pursuing Irish. The spirited poem of Edward Walsh well describes this encounter:—

“ Say who is this chief spurring forth to the fray,  
The wave of whose spear holds yon armed array?  
And he who stands scorning the thousands that sweep  
An army of wolves over shepherdless sheep.

<sup>1</sup> *Credran-Choluim-Chille*, in *Ros-geidh*.

<sup>2</sup> *Cota* was the saffron-dyed shirt of the kern, consisting of many yards of yellow linen, thickly plaited; *sciath*, the kern's wicker shield.



“ The shield of the nation, brave Geoffry O'Donnell  
(Clan-Fodhla's firm prop in the proud race of Conall),  
And Maurice Fitzgerald, the scorner of danger,  
The scourge of the Gael and the strength of the stranger.

“ The launch'd spear hath torn through target and mail,  
The couch'd lance hath borne to his crupper the Gael,  
The steeds driven backward, all helpless reel,  
But the lance that lies broken hath blood on its steel.”

Both combatants fell from horseback, desperately wounded. O'Donnell's injuries were so serious as to cause his immediate return with his troops to Tirconnell, where he died the following year from their effect. Fitzgerald's death occurred in the same year, but whether from his wounds or from natural causes is not specified. By this victory, according to the Four Masters, the Geraldines were driven out of Sligo, which remained in the possession of the O'Donnell; but an entry under date 1260 contraverts the assertion, for it is there stated that O'Donnell devastated the territory of the Geraldines in Carbury.

The exact locality of the field of battle has not been identified, but it was probably a little to the east of Cregg House, on the old road which follows the ancient track by which the O'Donnells so frequently led their armies across Drumcliff strand, through Springfield West, into Sligo. This supposed site is not in the present Rosses, but (as already stated) the Rosses formerly embraced a much wider area than now. Had the engagement taken place at the spot still marked by the ruins of the church near Rosses Point, the English must have been caught in a *cul de sac*, from which, after defeat, they would have been unable to extricate themselves, whereas it is stated that they retreated on Sligo. In the townland of Kintogher there is a well called Tobar Columbkille, near which was the probable site of *Credran*. Holy wells were generally situated near a church, and owed their reputation and name to the fact that the saint, anchorite, or hermit, after whom they were called, had dwelt on their verge, before disciples and converts had gathered around him, and enabled him to erect a fane in which to worship the Deity. From this year forward frequent mention will occur of the inroads of the O'Donnells; an historical account of Sligo necessarily includes the movements of that great family, which alone would form an eventful narrative.

At a meeting which took place in 1258 at Narrow Water, County Down, between Hugh, son of Felim O'Connor, chief of Connaught, and Brian O'Neill, the former surrendered to O'Neill his claims to the nominal sovereignty of the Irish, and in return O'Neill yielded the two Brefneys to O'Connor. At this period the two Brefneys extended from Kells, in Meath, to Drumcliff, in Sligo, thus comprising Cavan, Leitrim, a portion of Meath, and part of Carbury, in Sligo.

O'Neill's pretensions to the sovereignty of Ireland were of brief duration. He was overthrown and slain at the battle of Downpatrick, by the Lord Deputy, the following Sligo chiefs also losing their lives in the conflict—Mulroony MacDonough, chief of Corran, Cathal MacDonough, Teige O'Gara, and Conor MacAlarry, a chief of Leyny, &c.

In 1261 the Berminghams (who had Hibernicised their name to *MacFheorais*), plundered St. Feichin's Church at Ballysodare, and Cathal O'Hara, with five of his adherents, were slain. Donal O'Hara, chief of Leyny, then made a raid into the territory of the Berminghams, and Sefin Bermingham was slain, despite his having donned the Bell, or Bellcover, of St. Feichin's Church, in lieu of a helmet, with the idea, perhaps, that its melodious sounds when struck might prevent his assailant repeating the blow; or else, that the conscience of a scrupulous warrior might cause him to refrain from belabouring ecclesiastical property. Whatever the nature of his hopes might have been, the novel helmet had not the effect of preserving Bermingham's life.

The De Burgos were steadily encroaching on the territories of the native chiefs in Sligo; for in 1263, William De Burgo erected a castle in the then territory of Corran, at *Ath-an-ghaile*, or *Ath-in-gail*,<sup>1</sup> thus variously written, the site has not been identified.

In the parish of Aghanagh,<sup>2</sup> barony of Tirerrill, and townland of Carricknahorna (the rock of the barley), there is a cashel called Cashelalan, pronounced *caisiol aluin* by the country-people. O'Keefe, who was employed on the Ordnance Survey,

<sup>1</sup> Signifies, probably, Annaly's or Hennely's ford.

<sup>2</sup> Comprised in the more ancient Corran.

conjectured the fort to be the *Ath-an-ghaile* in Corran, named in the Annals as the site of De Burgo's castle,<sup>1</sup> but such a conjecture seems to rest on insufficient grounds. These circular forts were of very ancient type, and the castle of *Athanghaile* was an edifice of comparatively modern erection.

Originally Cashelalan was, seemingly, of no great extent ; its remains consist of a bank of flintstones, each but a few inches in length, and of whitish colour, hence the name. On the southern face of the fort there is some trace of a fortified entrance. If this were really the site of De Burgo's castle, it commanded a beautiful outlook ; to the north rose the frowning cliffs of Carriknahorna ; to the south extended the then thickly-wooded range of the Curlews—for then

“ There stood a forest on the mountain's brow  
Which overlook'd the shaded plains below ;  
No sounding axe presumed those trees to bite,  
Coeval with the world, a venerable sight.”

To the east was discernible the blue expanse of Lough Arrow, dotted with its numerous islands and its crannoges ; but the grim old castle which now frowns over the ford of Ballinafad, of which it was the custodian, was not then erected. Nearer can be seen the sepulchral mound of Corradoo, commemorative of the fallen in some great battle. The deeds of the slain were then sung by the bards ; but now all alike have been swept by the stream of time into deep oblivion.<sup>2</sup>

In 1264 a deadly feud broke out between the De Burgos and Geraldines.

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

<sup>2</sup> Corradoo is derived from *Cor*, a topographical term which has several meanings, but may here be understood in its most common sense, i.e., a round hill, and *doo*, *dooa*, and *dooey*, as it is variously written, which signifies a sepulchral mound or tumulus. Joyce remarks that this word is very often used in Irish writings, and it is frequently recorded that the bodies of the slain were buried in a *dooa*, which, being commonly formed of earth, has now, in many cases, disappeared. The locality is thus described in the Survey of 1633—36. “ Corduhy, 1 qr. The inheritance of Sir Robt. Kinge, Knt., whoe setts it to Carberey McDeire for £10 per ann.; it hath parte good arr<sup>ble</sup> land, and th'other part good pasture ; it hath good woode for fire, good turffe ; it will grase eighty cowes, and is worth £16 per annum.”



During its continuance a great part of Ireland was laid waste. De Burgo, however, finally managed to seize upon all the possessions of the Geraldines in Connaught, establishing his own retainers in their manors and castles in Sligo. These commotions must have seriously weakened the English cause, for the next year, Hugh O'Connor, aided by O'Donnell, captured and demolished the castle of Sligo, the castle of Banada,<sup>1</sup> in the parish of Kilmacteige, barony of Leyny, and the castle of *Rathaird craibh*, probably, Ardclare, in the same locality. Shortly after this, Felim O'Connor, chief of Connaught, died, and his son Hugh, was elected in his stead. He seems for many years previously to have been the *de facto* ruler, as his father lived to a very advanced age. In 1266, Donal O'Hara, chief of Leyny, was killed whilst in the act of setting fire to Ardnaree, then in the possession of the Berminghams who, from their territories in Roscommon and Galway, were continually making encroachments upon the O'Dowds in Tireragh. O'Hara and O'Dowd had conjointly assailed the Berminghams, and seem to have been repulsed. It is almost impossible from the various vague and conflicting accounts of the period to make out precisely either the period when the Berminghams conquered Tireragh, or when they were driven thence. According to Duald MacFirbis, Sen Brian O'Dowd, who died in 1354, drove the settlers out of Tireragh, and yet various conflicts are stated to have taken place in Tireragh after that date between the O'Dowds and the English. In Harris' "Hibernica" the Berminghams are said to have conquered all the country "from O'Brien country to Sligoe, in length about sixty miles and more, which continued so in prosperity forty yeres to Kyng Edward III<sup>rd</sup>. his dayes." Edward ascended the throne in 1327, so, roughly speaking, it may be conceded that the Berminghams completely conquered Tireragh and the district of Leyny up to Ballysodare, about 1290. By a deed of settlement of the estates of Gilbert de Bermingham, A.D. 1330, he disposed of Tireragh, and part of Leyny, in as ample a manner as other portions of his territory.

In this year (1266) Tireragh was pillaged by another expedition, under a chief named Flann Roe O'Flinn, who first burned

<sup>1</sup> *Benn-fhada*, i.e., long ridge.

Ballintogher,<sup>1</sup> in the parish of Ballysumaghan, barony of Tirerrill, killed the English of the "town," then marching into Tireragh, levelled several castles, and set fire to the cornfields.

Lochlan O'Connor, and the son of Donal Duv O'Hara, made a raid into West Connaught, and as trophies of victory brought back the heads of thirty "Britons," the Welsh being so designated by the Irish. In 1267, in order to avenge the losses they had sustained from the Sligo chiefs during the preceding year, the Welsh settlers of West Connaught plundered Ballysodare, devastated Carbury, pillaged Drumcliff Church, and set fire both to the sacred edifice and to the village.

In 1269 the Geraldines must have resumed possession of Sligo, for the castle, after lying in ruins during four years, was rebuilt by Fitzgerald, and Brian O'Hara was killed in the streets of the town by some of the garrison. The following year O'Donnell burned the town of Sligo, but failed in his endeavour to take the newly erected castle, and he lost one of his chiefs before the walls.

Hugh O'Connor, having defeated the Lord Justice, Robert de Ufford, on the banks of the Shannon, demolished several castles in Connaught, amongst them, De Burgo's stronghold of *Ath-an-ghaile*, in Corran, erected six years previously;<sup>2</sup> and in retaliation, the latter overran Tirerrill, the patrimony of one of the O'Conors; the struggle was carried on with varying success; but in 1271 O'Connor succeeded in capturing and demolishing the castle of Sligo, and the castle of Templehouse.<sup>3</sup> This is the first mention in the Annals of the latter stronghold; it is variously written *Taght*, *Tit*, or *Teach-Tempul*, and *Tech Templa*, Templehouse being its English equivalent. *Teach*, pronounced tagh, means a house of any kind, and is cognate with the Latin *tectum*; the term was used both in Pagan and Christian times,

<sup>1</sup> *Bhaile-an-tochair*, the town of the Causeway.

<sup>2</sup> See *ante*, p. 199.

<sup>3</sup> "According to Ware, this castle belonged to the Knights Templars, and was erected by the English in the thirteenth century. See Harris's edition, Vol. ii., p. 271. According to an Irish Manuscript in the possession of Major O'Hara, a castle was built here by the O'Haras, but the date of its erection is not added."—*O'Donovan's Notes to "Four Masters."*

and has found its way extensively into local names.<sup>1</sup> The best anglicised form is tagh, so that the correctly anglicised form of *Teach-Tempul* ought to be Tagh-Temple. *Teach*, meaning house, came to be used frequently in Christian times to denote a church, hence the word is often joined to the names of saints, to designate churches or ecclesiastical foundations, and tradition points to the Church of the Templars as standing near the shores of the lake, close to the remains of the castle.

All historians who have written on the subject are remarkably vague in their statements as to the date of its erection. Archdall is the most precise; he says it was founded by Knights Templars in the reign of King Henry III., *i.e.*, between A.D. 1216 and the date of its destruction by O'Connor in 1271. Little is known of the rise and fall of this Order in Ireland, but their establishments were not confined to the limits of the Pale. The sites of Commanderies of the Templars were generally selected on military and strategic principles, and in this instance *Tagh-Temple* was well placed for the purpose of keeping the passes to Sligo free for the English.

The designation Templars, or Knights-Templars, arose from the first head-quarters of the Order, established in 1118, having been close to the Temple at Jerusalem; they were also called "Soldiers of the Temple" and "Soldiers of Christ." Another designation, *Pauperes Commilitones*, or Pauper Soldiers, soon became very inapplicable to the Order. The canons or regulations of this community were very stringent. To solicit a kiss from a woman was a deadly breach of the rules of the Order: a rule which, at any rate amongst the junior members of the confraternity, was probably more honoured in the breach than in the observance. The distinguishing badge worn by the Knights was a white mantle with a red cross on the left breast; the red cross was carried on their banner, striped black and white, called *Beauseant*, an old French term, applied to designate a horse marked with three colours. Some interpret the stripes as signifying that the Order was candid and fair towards Christians, but black and terrible towards infidels. *Beauseant* was the famous war-cry of the Templar chivalry. The scene must have

<sup>1</sup> Joyce's Irish Names of Places, p. 300.



been singularly romantic. The grim castle, on the verge of the lake; in front an extensive meadow of the finest and most beautiful green turf, girt on the one side by forest, and on the other by the waters of the lough. The ground, as if fashioned on purpose for martial display, sloped down on all sides, till it formed the *faithche* in front of the commandery.

Beauseant! what memories this sacred and almost magic war-cry of the Order evokes! That war-cry which stirred so many mighty hearts on the arid plains of Palestine, before the walls of Acre and of Ascalon, which rang in the ears of the smitten army of Saladin, was never called in vain by any commander of that wondrous community, as remarkable in their greatness as in their fall.

One can picture the capture of *Tagh-Temple*; the striped banner flying on the donjon-keep; the fierce cry of the assailants, "O'Connor aboo," answered by the Knights' cry of "Beauseant;" the heroic but tumultuous attack, the brave defence. There is much of romantic incident in the early history of Sligo to inspire a novelist. Oh! for the pen of a Scott to people the scene with a Cœur de Lion and a Beaumanoir. The stronghold of the Order is now but a shattered ruin; the place that once knew them knows them no more; their very name is forgotten in the locality over which they lorded with all the authority of feudal proprietors.

From A.D. 1271, Templehouse must have been abandoned by the Knights; surrounded by Irish enemies, they would probably have been unable to rebuild it. Thirty-six years after the capture of this castle, the Order of Templars was suppressed in Ireland, and finally by Act of Parliament all their property was transferred to the Knights Hospitallers. At the dissolution of the religious houses, Templehouse, having escheated to the Crown, was leased by Elizabeth from the 20th April, 1578, to Thomas Chester and George Goodman, for twenty-one years, and shortly after the expiration of that term it was granted to the family of Crofton.

In 1273, Corran was ravaged by Jordan de Exeter; he was attacked by the O'Conors, whom he defeated. In the same year, O'Donnell, in an expedition to Tyrone against O'Neill, was accompanied by most of the Sligo chiefs.

Hugh O'Connor, who for nine years had ruled, or rather attempted to rule, the Irish of Connaught, died in 1274; his successor was assassinated three months after. The next elected to fill the vacancy was murdered within a fortnight, and Teige O'Connor then filled the dangerous position till the year 1278, when he was slain by MacDermot, and was succeeded by Hugh, surnamed the Momonian, or Munster-man, from the fact of his having been fostered in that province. He was an illegitimate son of Felim O'Connor, and this is probably the reason that Dr. O'Connor does not take any notice of him in his historical account of the family. This son does not appear to have been ever acknowledged by his father; but in lawless times persons of warlike character were often preferred to legitimate children of less combative disposition. The marriage ceremony does not appear to have stamped so much dignity on the character of the offspring, as the respectability and power of the mother's family, and their own bravery, which always commanded the admiration of the populace.<sup>1</sup>

Two years previously (in 1276) Hugh had sought the protection of O'Donnell, who escorted him with a large force as far as *Echeanach*, now Aghanagh, in the barony of Tirerrill, where he established himself in the territory he claimed, and no doubt from thence emanated the intrigues which two years later placed him on the provincial throne.

Aghanagh, the *Each-aineach* of the Tripartite Life of St. Patrick, is said to have been built by the National Saint, but local tradition ascribes its foundation to St. Maine; and it is recounted that when he was occupied in building the monastery, O'Rorke, Prince of Brefney, probably a pagan, attempted to annoy the saint and destroy his work. He advanced with his retainers to a ford on a little stream that flows from Tobermonia near the building. The church bell rang out spontaneously to give notice of the approaching danger; but one of the monks prayed that it might cease its clamour, lest the ringing should cause O'Rorke to discover where they were, and immediately the tongue fell from the bell.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> O'Donovan's Notes to Four Masters.

<sup>2</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.* In the year 1836 part of this bell (the tongue) was said to be in the possession of a family named

The saint, presumably of choleric temperament, prayed that O'Rorke might be unable to pass the ford, and furthermore prayed that any man of like name who should ever cross it might die within twelve months. His prayer was heard. O'Rorke did not pass; and ever since, it is believed that all of the name who cross the ford die within the year; the ford is still called O'Rorke's Ford. The doorway of Aghanagh Church is spanned by a low arch, and near it, on the inside, lies the broken font. There is a window on the south wall, but the eastern wall has disappeared. The edifice possesses no architectural beauty. According to local tradition, two cashels in the neighbouring townland of Cuilsheegharybeg were utilised by the saint in building the church.<sup>1</sup>

In 1278, Connaught appears to have been divided into two large districts or counties, *i.e.* (i.) Connaught, comprising the modern counties of Clare, Galway and Mayo; (ii.) Roscommon,

M'Maginans, in the barony of Leyny. It was probably only a hand-bell. The history of bells is one of the most interesting in the record of inventions. Bells are first heard of about the year 400, before which date rattles were used. In 960 the first peal of bells was hung in England, at Croyland Abbey.

<sup>1</sup> Inside the building is a modern mausoleum, the entrance closed by a carved tombstone, which now does duty for a door. This is surmounted with the crest and coat of arms of the Hughes family. On the flagstone is the following inscription:—

“ HERE . LYETH . THE . BODY  
OF . WINEFRED . HUGHES  
WIFE . TO . CAPTAIN . HEN-  
-RY . HUGHES . WHO . DECEA-  
-SED . THE . 1st (?) DAY OF  
MARCH . ANNO . DOMINI  
1609  
HERE . LYETH . THE  
BODY . OF . CAPTAIN ”

The remainder of the inscription, evidently in commemoration of the death of the above-mentioned Captain Henry Hughes, is buried in the ground. A countryman stated that a tombstone of about similar date, in memory of a Captain Dunbar, formerly adjoined this vault; but Father Egan, an energetic parish priest, who succumbed to the epidemic consequent on the famine of 1847, now reposes underneath. The slab bearing the epitaph on Dunbar was simply reversed, and Protestant and Catholic now sleep quietly together without sectarian animosity.



comprising Roscommon, Sligo, and Leitrim; separate sheriffs were appointed for each. The struggle in Tireragh between the O'Dowds and the Berminghams continued, despite the civil reformation in the province; and the alliance between O'Hara and O'Dowd remained unbroken, for Brian O'Dowd and *Art-na-capall* O'Hara, or Arthur of the Horses, defeated their opponents, killing the two sons of Myler More and Conor Roe Bermingham. The same year Roderick O'Conor and several other chiefs of distinction were murdered in the neighbourhood of Drumcliff by the MacClancys, of Rosclogher, in Leitrim; this was one of the wholesale massacres so frequent during the period of "anarchy, robberies, and rapines; of local feuds, horrid massacres, and assassinations."<sup>1</sup> In 1280, Hugh O'Conor was killed in one of these interminable local feuds, and Cathal O'Conor elected in his stead.

The Barrets having wrested part of Tirawley from Tahilly O'Dowd, he allied himself with Adam Cusack, and thus assisted, defeated his enemies; but Cusack turned against O'Dowd, his ally, in the following year, and after a hard-fought engagement, slew him at a place called, from the circumstance, *Bel-atha-Tailtigh*, the mouth of Tahilly's ford, in the district of Coillte-Luighne, probably some locality on the banks of the stream which divides the parishes of Ballysodare and Dromard, but the name is now obsolete.<sup>2</sup> This success of the Cusacks did not continue long. In 1285, Adam Cusack and the Welsh settlers of West Connaught were defeated by Manus O'Conor at *Lec-Essa-dara*, and Collin Cusack, brother to Adam, was placed in the hands of O'Conor, as security for the sum stipulated to be paid for permitting the Welshmen to draw off the remnants of their forces without molestation. After this, no further triumphs of the Cusacks in Connaught are recorded, and the Barretts appear to have recovered the possessions in Tirawley of which the Cusacks had for a short time deprived them. The scene of this skirmish, *Lec-Essa-dara* (the flagstone of Ballysodare), has

<sup>1</sup> O'Conor's Memoirs.

<sup>2</sup> In 1283, Teige O'Conor was wounded and taken prisoner by the men of Leyny, and died in prison of his injuries. To avenge the death of Simon de Exeter, the English in the following year laid waste the country; the district near the Curlew mountains suffered most.

not been identified with precision ; whether merely “ a flat rock in the river,” as defined by O'Donovan, some pedestal or monument in the village, or the village itself, is unknown. Whilst O'Conor was engaged in inflicting this defeat on the Welshmen, a party of his own people was surprised by Philip MacCostello, who had tracked and followed the flocks and herds driven into the glens and woods of the Tireragh mountains for concealment, by the O'Conors. The Jordans and Costellos had, about this period, driven the O'Garas from their original territories of Galenga and Sliabh-Lugha, within the bounds of the present county of Mayo. They then settled in the barony of Coolavin, county of Sligo, and erected the castle of Moygara, near the north-east extremity of the lake, where in this year Roderic O'Gara was slain by Bermingham.

In 1289, Bermingham and the English of the Leynys made an expedition against Calvach O'Conor. Bermingham was defeated, but no result worthy of mention seems to have followed. The Leynys, thus designated in the plural number, were Leyny O'Hara and Leyny Costello ; they included, along with the present barony of Leyny, in Sligo, some adjoining parts of the barony of Costello, in Mayo. Either towards the close of 1288, or the commencement of this year, an insurrection was raised by Manus O'Conor, supported by the inhabitants of the present counties of Cavan and Leitrim, with the object of depriving his brother, Cathal, of the chieftaincy of Connaught. He was defeated and deposed, Manus being elected in his stead. Cathal, however, again entered the field against him, and the opposing forces met at *Caraidh-Culmhaile*, the weir of Collooney. After a prolonged struggle, the forces of Manus were routed, and Cathal was severely wounded ; but his followers plundered Carbury from Ballysodare to *Cnoc-Laighen*, now Knocklane. Manus O'Conor, reinforced by the English, overtook the marauding expedition on a marshy plain in the barony of Boyle ; they were defeated, and all the booty recaptured. Towards the close of the eighteenth century, the entire district from Court to Knocklane was covered with blowing sand to the very summit of the hill. An extensive tract of land, then estimated at one thousand acres, had been deserted by its inhabitants, in consequence of the continual encroachment of the

sands, which had overwhelmed entire villages. In this sandy tract, now a fine bent farm, lies the old Church of Ballintemple, and on its north-western extremity is Knocklane, washed on the south-west and north by the ocean, and traversed by the two lines of fortifications already described.<sup>1</sup> This hill is rendered famous by the spirit of an adventurous lady, wife to Sir Nathaniel Gore (reputed by the country-people to have been the founder of Ardtarmon Castle<sup>2</sup>), who compelled her charioteer, under menace of death, to drive her chariot around the extremity of its declivity. The people called her the *Banshee-ban*, or the White Lady, because she always appeared dressed in white robes, and her horses were reputed to be shod with gold. At a period when almost every English manor-house had its haunted gallery or its mysterious ghost, we need not wonder to find an Irish family provided with an "*al fresco*" spirit. Surrounded by many intelligible terrors, with a changeable sea, and a troubled, electric-charged sky, a stagnant population found strange pleasure in the luxury of a local phosphorescent ghost. The fair *révenante*, however, no longer makes her appearance. Ghosts have, in fact, all vanished; the doubting *spirit* of these modern days has banished

"The graceful spirit-people, dwellers in the earth and sea."

The most experienced modern circus-driver would scarce attempt to guide his steeds around Knocklane, for both the height and extent of the hill are imposing. Approaching it from the south, it appears of a beautiful greenish colour. To the north-west the declivity is precipitous enough to affect the nerve of a person accustomed only to a champaign country. From the summit of

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> The castle, of which the remains are now to be seen, was erected by the Gore family; its origin comparatively modern. Like all buildings of the period, it had a large bawn, or fortified courtyard. It is difficult in the present day to discover its strategic purpose. It may have been thus placed to command the road to the peninsula and landing-place of Raughly; but if so, its more suitable position would have been on the narrow tongue of land which connects Raughly with the mainland. It is called in Irish *Cuirt-ard-Tearmuin*; sometimes simply Court.—*MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*



the hill the dark waters of the Northern Ocean may be observed receding from the view. In the distance are the prodigious cliffs towering above Teelan and Killybegs, and from which extend eastward a chain of irregularly-shaped mountains, ending in the northern brow of Ben-Weeskin. Directly opposite Knocklane are the three remarkable abruptly-terminating mountain extremities, which completely conceal from the eye the tract of country to their rere. Next is the long dark ridge of Braulieve, and nearer to the beholder the bare rocky mountain-range lying to the south of Sligo; whilst the town itself, its houses reflecting the beams of the western sun like so many shells (*slighean*) spread upon a strand, recalls to memory the supposed derivation of its name. To the right the view is bounded by Knocknarea; south of it, is visible a small portion of Traholly strand and the Tireragh range, behind which Croagh Patrick rears its summit. In the far distance a mass of other peaks meets the eye.

In 1293 De Burgo, surnamed from his complexion, the "Red Earl," overran Leyny, notwithstanding which, O'Hara refused to give him hostages; the next year Tuathal O'Connor was slain by the O'Haras.

The same year (1293), Manus O'Connor, king of Connaught, died; and although it is stated in the Four Masters that Manus' successor, Hugh, was murdered within ten days of his inauguration, yet, in 1294 he is said, on the same authority, to have captured and razed the castle of Sligo.<sup>1</sup> This castle had been granted by the Crown to John FitzThomas FitzGerald, Baron of Offaly, afterwards first Earl of Kildare, who was at this time in England to answer charges tendered against him by William de Vesey, Lord Justice of Ireland. The feud between these noblemen appears to have originated in a dispute about their estates. Although the quarrel is not of historical importance, yet Cox's narrative is interesting as a specimen of the language used by exalted personages of that age in public assemblies.

The following are extracts from speeches put by Cox into the mouths of the contending parties. The Lord Justice made accusation of treason against FitzGerald in Council, which he

<sup>1</sup> Malachy O'Flanagan, a Roscommon chief, was slain in the streets of Sligo, by Cathal MacDermot, and David MacAllary, a chief of Leyny, was killed by the sons of Donal Duv O'Hara.

repelled, and the Lord Justice thus retorted: "A gentleman!" quoth the Lord Justice, "thou bold Baron, I tell thee the Vesseys were gentlemen before the Geraldines were Barons of Ophaly; yea, and before that Welch bankrupt, their ancestor [he meant Sir Maurice FitzGerald], feathered his nest in Leinster. And whereas thou takest the matter so far in snuff, I will teach thee thy syripups after another fashion, than to be thus malapertly cocking and billing with me, that am thy governor," &c., &c.

Fitzgerald made a long and able speech in reply, in which he answered the accusation brought against him by De Vesey in his capacity of Lord Justice, and concluded thus: "But if you utter these speeches as a private person, then I, John Fitzgerald, Baron of Ophaly, do tell thee, William Vesey, a singesole gentleman, that I am no traitor, no felon. . . . Howbeit, during the time you bear office, I am resolved to give you the mastery in words, and to suffer you, like a brawling cur, to bark; but when I see my time I will be sure to bite."

These unseemly contentions raised considerable ferment, and both noblemen were summoned by King Henry to England. Fitzgerald, to prove the justice of his quarrel, challenged Vesey to single combat. The challenge was accepted, the time fixed; but when the day came, Vesey was in France. On being apprised of his flight, the king bestowed his Irish possessions on Fitzgerald, observing that "albeit Vesey had conveyed his person into France, yet he had left his lands behind him in Ireland." Fitzgerald, on his triumphant return, conducted himself in a manner quite consistent with the accusations brought against him by Vesey. In the endeavour to enlarge his vast possessions, he made war on De Burgo (the Red Earl), whom he surprised and imprisoned. His proceedings continued to be so violent that he was impeached, compelled to appear before the king, and to give security for his peaceable behaviour.

In Grace's Annals of Ireland, it is stated that De Burgo was set at liberty, and that Fitzgerald was deprived of the castle of Sligo, and all his possessions in Sligo and Connaught.

In 1296 Hugh O'Connor was deposed by Conor Roe O'Connor, and in consequence, all the province was in commotion, but the former was reinstated by De Burgo; meanwhile Carbury had been pillaged by Conor Roe, and all the churches in the district

despoiled ; but “ God, Columbkille, and Mary,” whose churches had thus been profaned, avenged these misdeeds shortly afterwards, for, having again rebelled, Conor Roe and his followers were defeated and slain.

In 1298 Donogh O’Hara, heir apparent to the chieftaincy of Leyny, was slain by his brother, Brian Carrach O’Hara.

In 1300 De Burgo commenced the erection of the castle of *Ath-cliath-in-Chorainn* (the hurdleford of Corran), the ancient name of Ballymote ; it received its new designation of *Baile-an-muta*, or *Baile-in-mhuta* (Ballymote), on the completion of the castle. In 1340, its next mention in the Annals occurs under the new nomenclature. It is interesting thus to have recorded the complete transformation of a name, which otherwise could not fail to perplex historians and lead to error. *Baile-an-muta* signifies the town of the *mota*, which is simply the English word “ moat,” the Anglo-Saxon “ mote ;” it is not an original Irish word, for it is not found in any ancient authority, nor is any instance of its occurrence recorded previous to the Anglo-Norman Invasion.<sup>1</sup>

The ruins of this castle form the largest, strongest, and most perfect specimen in the county of an ancient stronghold ; it remained intact until after the Revolution of 1688, when it was dismantled, and some of the materials utilised for building purposes. To travellers, the ruins still present a striking appearance as seen from the railway, standing between it and the village of Ballymote ; the curtain-walls are flanked by six round towers ; the remains of the summit of the most lofty being still about sixty feet in height. Through the walls, more than nine feet in thickness, there was a gallery or covered way, and a platform, or broad footpath, ran round the top of the defences, inside the battlements, which were about two feet thick. Some traces of outworks remain, probably, for defence of the gates, but they are too meagre to convey any clear idea of their original plan or extent. The walls enclose an area of about 150 square feet, each front being regular. This building, after its completion, was considered of great importance, and it is frequently brought under notice in the various feuds of the fourteenth and succeeding centuries. Its now deserted battlements have braved the storms of nearly 600 years, and the chiefs who held sway

<sup>1</sup> O’Donovan.



within its walls during that long period were often of different and opposing parties, as the fate of war might decide. Richard de Burgo, "the Red Earl," founded numerous monasteries and castles in various parts of Ireland, besides the castles of Ballymote, Corran, and Sligo, in the present County of Sligo. He was the most powerful subject in Ireland, and made war, raising and deposing at his pleasure the native chiefs of Connaught and Ulster. He finally attained such eminence that his name took precedence of the Lord Justice in all commissions and parliamentary rolls. He closed a long and active public life by giving a magnificent entertainment to the nobility assembled at a Parliament held in Kilkenny, after which he retired to the monastery of Athasil, in Tipperary, where he died in 1326.

In 1301 great depredations were committed by Hugh O'Connor, and the inhabitants of Roscommon, on Teige O'Connor,<sup>1</sup> in *Magh-g-Cedne*, a plain situate between the rivers Drowes and Erne, and formerly belonging to the district of Sligo. In an Inquisition, 13 Jac. I., it is called Moygh, *alias* Moygene, and described as "inter flumina de Earne et Drohes in com' Donigall, Letrym et Slygoe, vil eorum altero." The district is celebrated by the old chroniclers as the scene of many battles in early ages between the Nemedians and Fomorians.

In 1303 Dermot O'Flanagan a chief of Fermanagh, his two sons, and many of his chiefs, were slain by the followers of Donal O'Connor;<sup>2</sup> they had proceeded from Fermanagh to plunder Carbury, but were surprised on the banks of the Bunduff, on the borders of Leitrim and Sligo, by the O'Conors.

The meaning of the word *bun* is the bottom or end of anything, and it is often applied, as in this instance, to the end or mouth of a river. Many places situated at the *débouchure* of a stream have, in this manner, received their names.

In 1306 the O'Conors of Roscommon plundered Carbury. In defending this district, David O'Cavanagh, chief from Toomour in Mayo to the river Leaffony, in Tireragh, together with other chiefs of Sligo, fell. Nicholas O'Donchie, a priest of the monastery of St. Columbkille, at Drumeliff, was killed by Gerran-

<sup>1</sup> Teige was son of Andreas, son of Brian Luighneach, the ancestor of O'Connor Sligo.

<sup>2</sup> Son of Andreas, *i.e.*, a brother of the above Teige.

dubh-Barrett, or Barrett of the "Black Horse," so named, in all probability, from some famed charger he bestrode on his marauding incursions. The unfortunate ecclesiastic, who thus provoked the ire of this lawless warrior, was held in special respect, for it is stated in the Annals that whoever "recites a pater for the good of his soul has six score days' remission of his sins as often as he recites it." A chief, named O'Flanagan, was slain by Brian Carragh O'Hara. In the following year (1307) Donnell O'Connor,<sup>1</sup> heir to the chieftaincy of Connaught, fell in a skirmish, by the hand of Dermot, son of "Simon of the Strand," a chief whose territory probably bordered on the celebrated Traholly Strand. Donnell was nominal chief over the entire extent of the present county of Sligo, and also over *Magh-g-Cedne*; his possessions are described as extending from the Curlew mountains to the narrow part of Lough Erne, near Castle Caldwell, in Fermanagh. His corpse was conveyed across the Curlews with great pomp and ceremony, and interred in the Abbey of Boyle; never before had a funeral procession been witnessed, with such quantities of cattle, sheep, horses, arms, and clothing. Judging by the tone of the passage, the inference is that these were intended for the clergy as dues, rather than for distribution in the way of alms.<sup>2</sup>

On the death of Donnell O'Connor, the O'Conors of Roscommon overran Carbury, and burned the crops in Tirerrill, Corran, and *Magh-g-Cedne*.

These raids continued without intermission for some time, and in 1308 MacDermot defeated the Sligo forces, in a skirmish which took place in Carbury; but hardly had MacDermot retired, when Brian O'Dowd, and the English of Leyny, swooped down upon Sligo, and carried off whatever little remained to be gleaned. O'Connor of Sligo, and MacDonough of Ballymote, outnumbered and discouraged, seem to have retreated before them into the defiles of the Slieve Dæane range, between Collooney and Lough Gill, whither they were tracked by the English of Leyny, and O'Dowd; there O'Connor turned to bay, routed and pursued his adversaries as far as Ballysodare,<sup>3</sup> slaying Thomas MacWalter,

<sup>1</sup> Son of Teige, and ancestor of O'Connor Sligo.

<sup>2</sup> W. M. Hennessy's note to the "Annals of Lough Cé," Vol. i., p. 540.

<sup>3</sup> Lec-essa-dara.

constable of the castle of Buninna, in Tireragh, and many others. Buninna, anciently *Bun-fhinne*, i.e., the mouth of the river Finn, is still the name of a townland in the parish of Dromard, barony of Tireragh. On the old map, showing part of the coasts of Donegal, Leitrim, and Sligo, preserved in the State Paper Office, London,<sup>1</sup> a castle, under the name of "Ca Bonin," is noted immediately to the north of Tonerigowe (Tonrego), and near the brink of Ballysodare Bay, in the parallel of Knocknarea. In the Survey of 1633-6 this townland is called Carrow-in-castlan, i.e., *castle quarter*; in the Down Survey it is called Carrow-caslane, *alias* Bonanné; and in the deed of partition of O'Connor Sligo's estate, dated 21st July, 1687, it is called Bonin. Giolla Iosa More MacFirbis, in 1417, thus alludes to the locality—

"Bun fhinne a n-áitreb oib  
 Fhinne flait-gel rochoroe."

"Bun-Fhinne is another habitation,  
 A white wattled pile of hosts." <sup>2</sup>

The O'Conors of Roscommon, who had entered into a truce with the O'Conors of Sligo, broke their engagements, and ravaged some districts which had hitherto escaped. Thereupon ensued a succession of raids; the O'Conors of Sligo pillaged Roscommon, and their neighbours retaliated. It is fearful to picture the state of the country thus laid waste month after month, every man's hand against his neighbour—whilst the disturbances were further aggravated by the death of Hugh O'Connor, chief of Connaught, Rory O'Connor being elected in his stead. In 1309 the O'Conors of Roscommon again swooped down upon Tirerrill, and set fire to the standing crops of corn. This sept was the *Clann-Murtough*, the descendants of the celebrated Murtough Mumhneach O'Connor; they were at this time moving from territory to territory, without any fixed possessions; but in 1342 they were so powerful, that their principal leader Hugh, became chief of Connaught, despite the O'Conors of Sligo, or race of Brian Luighneach. In the succeeding century, however, they sank into obscurity, and disappear from history.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Escheated Counties of Ulster, &c., Zincographed 3rd Sept., 1860.

<sup>2</sup> "Hy-Fiachrach," pp. 284-5.

<sup>3</sup> O'Donovan.



De Burgo crossed the Curlew mountains from Boyle, and compelled Rory O'Connor to abandon his fortified camp near Sligo; he then laid waste the country as far as Ben-Bulbin. The next year (1310), Hugh O'Connor, hearing that the castle of Buninna, in Tireragh, had been left undefended by De Burgo, sought aid from his brother Rory, then smarting under the humiliation he had just undergone, and the castle was captured and burned. In consequence of this, De Burgo strengthened the castle of Sligo, and reinforced the garrison. In 1311, William MacAllary, a chief of Leyny, was slain in a foray against the *Clann-Murtough*, and the extreme northern portion of Carbury was pillaged. In 1312, twenty tuns of wine washed ashore on the coast, would seem to denote that trade with the Continent at this early date was considerable.

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BOOK IV.

CHAPTER VI.

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DECLINE OF ANGLO-NORMAN POWER.







## BOOK IV.

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### CHAPTER VI.

#### DECLINE OF ANGLO-NORMAN POWER.

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“ The Knights are dust,  
And their good swords are rust,  
Their souls are with the saints, we trust.”

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“ While sounds of war are heard around,  
And death and ruin strew the ground ;  
. . . . .

O see with what insatiate rage  
Thy sons their impious battles wage ;  
How spreads destruction like a flood,  
And brothers shed their brothers' blood.”



THE prevailing national spirit of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Ireland was faction. During peace or war, amity or opposition, faction pervaded and controlled every branch of society. The feebleness of the central administration quickly bore fruit ; finding the Crown either unable or unwilling to grant support, many English barons renounced name, language, dress, manners, and every right pertaining to their former status of English subjects. Their dependants, and many of the settlers, followed the example thus set, and the result was a serious deterioration of civilisation, from which Connaught did not speedily recover. Usurpation, and acts contrary to the law of England, could be maintained by renunciation of that law, and thus English settlers occupied the position of enemies.

Connaught was plunged into indescribable chaos by the ruinous policy of the Crown, reluctant concessions wrung from it by violence, compromises effected which were looked on as proofs of weakness, alternated with vindictive retaliation when powerful enough.

In Ireland all feuds were those of individuals contending for their own purposes, to protect or defend themselves, or to rob and murder. Irish chiefs and English barons may alike be viewed as bandit leaders, each looking to preserve his own domain, and to encroach, if possible, on his neighbour's. There was no principle contended for; Irish chiefs did not unite to repel the English; English barons, save in a few exceptional cases, did not combine to control usurpation; there was no vindication of the common law, no public feeling; the disorders of society were marked by low instincts, passions, appetites, and no attempt was made to raise the social condition of the people. Such was the general state of society when Edward Bruce landed in Ulster. Dissensions prevailed amongst the English barons, and they were probably more intent on considering how this invasion might be made instrumental to their private animosities or cupidities, than on the means of averting the public calamity. This invasion convulsed Ireland from sea to sea. Felim O'Connor, the chief of Connaught, alone, of all the Irish chiefs, appeared to remain true to the English, not, however, without consideration of his own claims to the sovereignty. He was at the time about twenty-two years of age, high-spirited, and distinguished for military ardour, but rash and inexperienced. Impatient of the domineering influence under which he was held in control by the power and pride of the De Burgos, he was particularly susceptible to the secret seductions of Bruce. De Burgo raised the levies of Connaught, and advanced against Bruce; but abandoned by Felim O'Connor, who had meantime been won over by the invader, he was defeated. Bruce then, turning on the Lord Justice Butler, overthrew the levies of the Pale. Felim O'Connor returned to Connaught, only to find it in possession of his rival, Roderick, who, amongst other places, had burned the towns<sup>1</sup> of Sligo and Ballymote. Felim's

<sup>1</sup> *Sradbhaile*, i.e., street town.



adherents seized Tomaltach MacDonough, of Corran, who had joined Roderick; and Felim, in conjunction with his friends, pillaged the territory of Brian O'Dowd, in Tireragh. MacDermot crossed the Curlews in a north-western direction, passed through Coolavin, Corran, and Leyny, and joined by MacDonough, reinforced Felim, who had been pursued by Roderick O'Connor as far as *Letir Luighne*<sup>1</sup> and the slopes of the Ox mountains, and to *Glen-Fathroimh*, in the barony of Leyny, a glen at present not identified. This dell, surrounded by woods and thickets that clothed the mountain-sides, seems to have been a hiding-place, where the non-combatants of Felim's party had taken refuge, driving before them their flocks and herds, and trusting to the seclusion of the locality for security. But this did not screen them from the vigilance of the enemy, and the adherents of Roderick O'Connor appear to have behaved with a degree of wanton barbarity, conspicuous even in that age. "They stripped gentlewomen, and killed small children and little ones, and never during the memory of the people was so much cattle uselessly destroyed in one spot."

The struggle between the O'Conors continued. Felim appeared to have gradually gained ground, when O'Donnell, at the instigation of his wife, a daughter of Manus O'Connor, invaded Carbury, desirous either to make a diversion in favour of Roderick, or with the hope of profiting by the commotion to add to his own principality of Tirconnell. The churches of Carbury were sacked, the *coarbs* of Drumcliff plundered, the castle of Sligo captured and razed; severe weather set in, and famine and fever stalked through the land.

The spring of the following year (1316) brought back O'Donnell, who marched through Carbury, and took up his quarters at Castleconor, in Tireragh. Roderick O'Connor made submission to O'Donnell, and received Carbury from him, in fief or vassalage; but Devorgail, daughter of Manus O'Connor, bribed a band of Tirconnellian gallowglasses, in the pay of Roderick, to assassinate him, in violation of the oath which they had taken on the "Relics of Tirconnell" (probably the celebrated psalter so highly prized by that tribe), and the territory of Carbury was

<sup>1</sup> A district in the barony of Leyny.



again ravaged by these mercenaries. Felim, joined by the Welsh settlers of West Connaught, at length succeeded in effecting the overthrow of his adversaries, so that he became undisputed head of the Irish in the province, from Ballyshannon, in Donegal, to *Slieve Aughty*, between the counties of Galway and Clare. He was now the most distinguished champion of the Irish cause. He harassed the Pale by devastating incursions, and killed many distinguished knights. He plundered and burned the entire district, from the castle of Corran to the river Robe in Mayo, and did not spare even the churches. At the head of the Connaught forces, he encountered the English under William de Burgo and Richard de Bermingham, at Athenry, county Galway, where, on the 10th of August, a fierce and most decisive battle was fought. The Connaughtmen were defeated with great slaughter; 11,000 are said to have fallen. Amongst the slain were Felim himself, Hugh O'Hara chief of Leyny, Malachy Carroch, Conor Oge, and Murtagh O'Dowd, five of the MacDonoughs, and numberless other chiefs. To the power of the O'Conors, as chiefs of Connaught, this battle gave a mortal blow, from which they never recovered. In common with many other native families of note, they were swept down from their state, and ceased to retain historic importance, after a few generations of struggle amongst the violent eddies of a great revolutionary tide.

Two other members of the O'Conor family were elected to the precarious dignity of Chief of Connaught, only to fall, within a few months, beneath the knife of an aspiring rival.

1317. Taking advantage of these troubles, Miles de Exeter, lord of Ballylahon in *Gailenga*, of Leyny, made a raid as far as Drumcliff. He was met by the O'Conors on the borders of the *Methenach*, a small river near the present village, and was there slain, together with fourteen of his retainers.

In 1318 the castle of Ballymote was dismantled, but whether by the MacDonoughs or by the English is not stated. Torlogh O'Conor, who had established himself in the precarious position of Chief of Connaught, joined by Tomaltach MacDonough, lord of Tirerrill, and other Sligo chiefs, besieged Cathal O'Conor (from whose brother Murtoigh] the O'Conors of Sligo

descended<sup>1</sup>) in his fortress<sup>2</sup> or dun in *Fassa-coilleadh*, i.e., the waste of the wood,<sup>3</sup> pronounced Fassakilly. It was the name of a wooded district to the north of the present barony of Carbury. Cathal offered a large sum of money to induce Torlogh to withdraw his forces, but the offer was refused, the fortifications assaulted and carried, Cathal and the garrison driven into the "houses in the very middle of the fortress," from whence, however, he made a furious sally, and regained possession of the ramparts, utterly defeating and slaying great numbers of his assailants. This slight change of fortune was attended with the usual result: the minor chiefs abandoned Torlogh, and espoused the cause of Cathal, who ravaged North Connaught, as also the territory of MacDermot, deposed his adversary, and caused himself to be proclaimed chief of the province.

In this year, Bruce, after a career of pillage and rapine, was defeated and slain at Dundalk. In the Annals the event is thus recorded: "And no better deed for the men of all Erin was performed since the creation of the world, since the Fomorian race was expelled from Erin, than this deed, for theft and famine and destruction of men occurred throughout Erin during his time, for the space of three years and a half, and people used without doubt to eat one another." Bruce, like many other adventurers, was at first hailed as a deliverer. He fell, however, in popular estimation, as suddenly as he had risen, but the effects of his deeds long survived. The frightful devastations committed by him reduced the country to a state of weakness and disorganization, from which it did not fully recover for nearly two hundred years; also the number of the English-speaking population was lessened, and the complete subjugation of the country retarded. During their first settlement in Connaught, the castles erected by the Anglo-Norman barons were principally in the plains, for security of their possessions, and

<sup>1</sup> The Pedigree of O'Connor Sligo, is thus given by Duaid MacFirbis, in his genealogical work: (i.) Murtagh, died 1327; (ii.) Donnell; (iii.) Owen; (iv.) Donnell; (v.) Cathal Oge; (vi.) Teige; (vii.) Cathal Oge; (viii.) Donnell O'Connor Sligo; (ix.) Sir Calvagh, or Sir Charles, O'Connor Sligo.

<sup>2</sup> *Longphuirt*.

<sup>3</sup> This would correspond to a clearing in an American forest.

the mountainous districts were left to the Irish. After Bruce's invasion, the English, diminished in number, their positions scattered and isolated, without any common system of defence, were in many instances surprised and cut off. Thus, in the course of time the native Irish regained a great portion of their former possessions; the advantage of strongholds became apparent to them, and they likewise began to erect castles. Soon the country was studded with stone fortifications of quadrangular form, with towers at the angles, in which the garrison and family dwelt; a watchman, constantly stationed on the loftiest of these towers, gave the alarm on approach of an enemy; the cattle on the contiguous plains were then driven into the bawn, or enclosure flanked by the towers, and the garrison prepared to repel an assault, or sallied out to meet the assailants. It was no uncommon occurrence in those times to see a family or tribe, rich in flocks and herds, surprised, plundered, and in a single day left destitute of subsistence.

In 1320, Cathal O'Connor, chief of Connaught, appointed a meeting with Mulroony MacDermot, chief of Moylurg, and Tomaltoch MacDonough, chief of Tirerrill, for the purpose of arranging a truce; but Cathal broke faith, seized upon the persons of MacDermot, his wife *Grainné*, or Grace, and MacDonough; then plundered their territories.

In 1321, Grace MacDermot died in captivity, as did also her husband the year after; whilst in 1324, Cathal, having held his precarious dignity six years and a half, was, together with Gilla-Christ Oge MacDonough, chief of Tirerrill, defeated and slain by his rival, Torlogh O'Connor, who assumed the chieftaincy.<sup>1</sup>

In 1328 a conference took place between the De Burgos and MacCostellos on the one side, and MacDermot and MacDonough on the other, for the purpose of ending their disputes. They met by mutual arrangement at *Ath-cind Locha Techet*, i.e., the ford at the head of Lough Gara, but from words they came to blows, and the De Burgos and MacCostellos were routed.

<sup>1</sup> In 1327, Gormley, daughter of MacDermot, died. She had married — 1st, Manus O'Connor, Tanist of Connaught; 2nd, Conor O'Kelly, chief of Hy Maine; 3rd, Fergal O'Hara, chief of Leyny, probably the Fergal O'Hara whose death is entered under date 1323.



On the murder, in 1333, of William de Burgo, the young Earl of Ulster, who left an only child, Elizabeth, the chiefs of the junior branches of the family of De Burgo, or Burke, then seated in Connaught, fearing the transfer of his possessions into strange hands, by the marriage of the heiress, seized upon his estates in that province. The two most powerful of these chiefs, Sir William, or Ulick, the ancestor of the Earls of Clanrickard, and Sir Edmund Albanagh, the progenitor of the Viscounts of Mayo, having banded together, and declared themselves independent, renounced the English dress and language, and adopted Irish names, Sir William taking the name of MacWilliam Oughtier (or the Upper), and Sir Edmund that of MacWilliam Eighter (or the Lower). Under these names the two powerful chiefs tyrannised over the entire Province of Connaught ; and, although Lionel, Duke of Clarence, third son of Edward III., in right of his wife Elizabeth, laid claim to their usurped possessions, the Government appears to have been too weak to assert the authority of English laws, so that the territories of the Burkes were allowed to descend in course of tanistry and gavelkind.<sup>1</sup> But this did not prevent the Burkes from contending amongst themselves ; and in 1338 one of the family was murdered in a most brutal manner, by Edmond Burke, who fastened a stone to his neck and drowned him in Lough Mask. Edmond Burke, however, was driven out of Connaught, by Torlogh O'Conor, chief of the province, was forced to take refuge in the islands off the coast, and had finally to abandon even that asylum. The English of Leyny and Corran were plundered and deprived of their territories and power by the Irish chiefs ; and from this year may be dated the decline of English power in Connaught.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Clarence, in right of his wife, was created Earl of Ulster and Lord of Connaught, and these titles were enjoyed through marriage, or descent, by different princes of the royal blood, until at length, in the person of Edward IV., they became the special inheritance and revenue of the Crown of England.—O'Donovan's Notes to "Four Masters."

<sup>2</sup> In 1336 Conor MacDermot, the MacDonough, and Cormac O'Conor, with the levies of Carbury, proceeded to Tireragh on a plundering expedition ; they penetrated as far as Rathlee ; but on news of their approach, the flocks and herds of the district had been driven off, and there remained only what had been too bulky for hasty removal.

In 1340 Hugh O'Connor was taken prisoner by his uncle Torlogh, and confined in the castle of Roscommon; his imprisonment was the cause of feud between MacDermot and O'Connor, and the country was plundered indiscriminately by both; finally, MacDermot drove his adversary into the castle of Ballymote, and there besieged him; but ultimately they came to terms.

In 1342 Hugh O'Connor was elected chief of Connaught, and Torlogh was deposed, through the influence of the Burkes; and supported by the same league, Fergal MacDermot seized on the chieftaincy of Tirerrill, and expelled the rightful possessor, Teige MacDonough, who fled to Torlogh O'Connor.

In 1344 Mahon MacDermot was slain on the Curlew mountains, by the O'Healys, of Ballyhealy.<sup>1</sup> The O'Healys' original patrimony was in the present parish of Drumrat, barony of Corran.

In 1346, a feud broke out between Ualgarg O'Rorke, chief of Brefney, and Roderick O'Connor, chief of Sligo. Their opposing forces came into collision within the bounds of the present parish of Calry.<sup>2</sup> O'Rorke's heavy-armed infantry were cut to pieces; O'Rorke himself escaped from the field of battle, but was pursued, and slain by Mulroony MacDonough. A party of the O'Conors followed the victors to Collooney, and MacDonough was there defeated; the entire district was then laid waste.

In 1348 Farrel MacDermot and Roderick O'Connor having quarrelled, O'Connor set fire to MacDermot's fortress, situated on Longford Hill, in Rockingham Demesne. The latter assembled his followers, pursued O'Connor to Ballymote, burned the town<sup>3</sup> without opposition, and released some of O'Connor's prisoners, amongst them the son of O'Rorke, who had remained in captivity from the defeat of the Brefnians, in Calry, two years before. In the following year MacDermot, joined by O'Donnell, once more marched against Roderick O'Connor, who fled for refuge to Glenfarne, in Leitrim, and when the invaders had retired, mustered a large force, and plundered the greater part

<sup>1</sup> *Muintir-Elidhe*, of *Bhaile-ui-Elidhe*, now Hollybrook Demense, on the shores of Lough Arrow, the residence of Colonel folliott.

<sup>2</sup> *Calraidhe locha-gile*.

<sup>3</sup> The Annals add, "both stone and wood," showing that dwellings were at this period built with either material, wood being still abundant.

of MacDermot's territory; but in 1350, at the instigation of Hugh O'Connor, he was treacherously slain by the MacDonoughs, on the Bricklieve<sup>1</sup> Mountains, at a place called *Garrdha-na-Fiongaile*, which would be anglicised Garrynafiney, but the name is obsolete. This part of the mountain-range lies between Lough Labe and Kesh Corran—the ruins of Bricklieve castle still remain.

In 1352 Hugh, son of Torlogh O'Connor, who had assumed the chieftaincy of Connaught, captured and dismantled the castle of *Baile-an-Duin*, now Ballindoon (the town of the dun or earthen fort), and possessed himself of great numbers of cattle and sheep. Of the castle, one wall alone remains, on a knoll overlooking Lough Arrow, it is therefore not possible to judge of the style of architecture. Some slight traces of an outwork may be observed close to the lough, evidently the waterside entrance of the stronghold; near it is a clear spring, still called "Armourers' Well," probably so named from being used by the craftsmen for tempering the weapons of warfare. If that well and the old wall could disclose the scenes which they had witnessed, what a romance might be written. Close to these ruins are the remains of the Abbey of Ballindoon.

In 1427 the family of MacDonough, lords of Corran and Tirerrill, founded here an establishment to the honour of the Virgin, for nuns of the Order of St. Dominick.<sup>2</sup> An Inquisition of 27th Queen Elizabeth found their possessions to consist of a church and cemetery, with half a quarter of land of every kind; annual value, 6s. 8d. English money.<sup>3</sup> These possessions were granted to Francis Crofton, who assigned the same to Edward Crofton. The arrangement of the central tower of this building is worthy of special mention. The observer, standing at the northern end of the church, may gaze through the numerous arches supporting the tower, and view the still almost perfect tracery of the window, and the fine landscape which lies beyond. On the side of the lake an outer flight of stone steps leads to the vaulted story of the tower; with a little caution the steps are yet passable, though broken in places. The remains of a formidable intrenchment still surround it,

<sup>1</sup> *Brec-shliabh*.<sup>2</sup> Ware. "Mon.:"<sup>3</sup> King, p. 94.



save towards the lake-side, which descends precipitously to the marsh bordering the lough ; by slight scarping this could even now, in a military sense, be made unassailable. On one side the intrenchment extends in a curve towards the road, near which appear to be traces of a bastion, or fort. Taken altogether, the remains are really more extensive than the marking on the Ordnance Map would seem to denote. Near this fort is St. Dominick's Stone ; on its top a cup-shaped hollow, generally full of water, is still supposed by the country-people to be a certain cure for warts. At the termination of the intrenchment at foot of the cliff, and overshadowed by trees, the well which bears the name of the same saint, gushes forth from the face of the precipice ; at its birth it sends forth a stream of sufficient magnitude, but not long-lived, for after meandering leisurely through the low-lying marsh between the abbey and lake, it pours its tribute into the expanse of Lough Arrow. On the 4th of August (St. Dominick's Day), stations were performed so late as 1836 at this well ; there were stations also at the stone situated to the north of the fane,<sup>1</sup> not far from the remains of the earthen entrenchment, which has all the appearance of having been thrown up in disturbed times for protection of the building. Within the abbey, is a monumental slab, which, though of very modern date (1737), is yet so original and peculiar that a portion of it is given—

“ Terence McDonnogh lyes w<sup>th</sup>in this grave,  
That says enough for all that's Generous, brave,  
Fasecious, Friendly, Witty, Just, and Good,  
In the lov<sup>d</sup> Name is fully understood,  
For it includes what e'r wee Virtue call,  
And is the Hieroglyphic of them all.”

In 1359 Cathal Oge, son of O'Connor of Sligo, overthrew O'Donnell at Ballyshannon, and captured several of his principal chiefs. At this period O'Connor made strenuous exertions to conquer Tirconnell, and in the Dublin copy of the Annals of Ulster, it is stated that he became Prince of Tirconnell ; but the Four Masters, although they had this work before them, suppressed the passage, possibly under the impression that it might

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

derogate from the glory of the O'Donnells. This Cathal Oge O'Connor seems to have been a great warrior, also to have understood that passable roads and bridges were needful for military movements and, although in 1360 the town of Sligo was burned, probably by O'Donnell, yet the same year, a bridge of mason-work was built by O'Connor over the river of Ballysodare, being the first recorded stone and mortar bridge in the county of Sligo; it was, probably, also one of the earliest in the kingdom. Before this epoch the usual structures were of boughs, wicker-work, or planks. Distinct mention is made of two wickerwork bridges, erected by an O'Connor across the Shannon at Lanesborough, and at Athlone; also, of a plank bridge, possibly of more solid construction, at Killaloe. The bridges of Ireland, their materials and form, both before and after the arrival of the English, when, and by whom, erected, and the historical facts connected with them, would form an interesting subject of antiquarian research. The Annals would furnish information of early date, and of a more recent period much would be found amongst the State and legal records. The origin of stone bridges in Ireland is not very accurately ascertained; none of any importance were erected previous to the twelfth century. Petrie and O'Donovan state, that it is almost certain no bridges with stone arches were built till after the arrival of the Anglo-Normans. O'Connor, to whom the bridge in question owed its erection, appears to have made early military use of it; he crossed it the same year, on a pillaging incursion into Tirawly, in Mayo.

The English of Connaught had joined in an alliance against him, and plundered and devastated Leyny and Tireragh; Cathal Oge retaliated, by pillaging and laying waste the territories of his adversaries, MacWilliam Burke and Bermingham. But his career was brought to an abrupt termination; he died of a pestilence, in the castle of Sligo, 3rd November, 1362; he was son of Cathal, grandson of Donnell, King of Connaught, and was one of the most able and warlike of the O'Conors of Sligo; had his life been prolonged, he would doubtless have brought Sligo more prominently forward in history. The pestilence which in this year ravaged Ireland, and to which he fell a victim, was called in Irish *Cluithe-an-righ*, literally, the King's Game,

but nothing has been discovered to prove the exact nature of the malady. The disease called the King's Evil is so named for no other reason than that it was formerly commonly believed to be curable by the royal touch, and it may be conjectured that the name *Cluithé-an-righ*, given to this pestilence, had its origin in some similar notion.<sup>1</sup>

In 1365, the Costellos of Mayo invaded Leyny, and Cormac O'Hara, with six of his chiefs, were slain in defending their territory.

In 1367, Teige O'Connor was defeated on Traholly<sup>2</sup> strand, near Ballysodare, by his rival, Donnell O'Connor, in conjunction with O'Rorke of Leitrim, and MacDonough of Tirerrill. Teige O'Connor lost one hundred and fifty gallowglasses,<sup>3</sup> or heavy-armed infantry, together with several chiefs of note; amongst them Cosnamhaigh, son of the William O'Dowd, Bishop of Killala, whose death is mentioned under date 1350.

In 1368, on the death of Hugh O'Connor, chief of Connaught, Roderick O'Connor assumed the title, and *Crioch Cairpre* (the present barony of Carbury) was by family arrangement divided between the two combatants of the previous year, Donnell and Teige. Teige was induced by Cormac MacDonough to accompany him to Roderick O'Connor's fortress at Ardakillen, in Roscommon. Here he was imprisoned, and shortly after delivered into the hands of his rival, Donnell, who, to secure himself in possession of the entire barony of Carbury, kept him close

<sup>1</sup> O'Donovan's Notes.

<sup>2</sup> Traigh-Eothuille-an-t-Saoir.

<sup>3</sup> "Gallowglasses, in Irish *Galloglacha*, were the heavy-armed foot-soldiers of the Irish; they wore iron helmets, and coats of mail studded with iron nails and rings; had long swords by their sides, and bore in their right hands broad battle-axes with very keen edges, by a single blow of which they often clove the skull of a warrior through his helmet. It appears that the Scots also had troops called gallowglasses and kerns, as in Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' mention is made of 'the merciless MacDonnell from the Western Isles, with his kerns and gallowglasses.' Kerns, in Irish *Cethern*, derived, according to Cormac's Glossary of the Tenth Century, from *Ceth*, that is *cath*, a battle, and *arn*, plundering, was the term applied to the light troops of the Irish, armed with spears, javelins, darts, slings, and arrows," &c.—*Notes to Connellan's Edition of the "Four Masters,"* pp. 156-7.



prisoner till 1371, then slew him with his own hands in the Castle of Sligo. Teige belonged to a branch of the descendants of Brian Luighneach senior to that of his slayer, he being the son of Manus, son of Cathal, King of Connaught in 1324, whose brother, Murtough, was father of Donnell, the slayer of Teige and the founder of the family of the O'Conors of Sligo. Even in those turbulent times, the murder seems to have made a great impression, for it passed into a proverb, and every great breach of faith was likened to this act of treachery, of which the result was to embroil the county in the contests of Roderick O'Connor, Mac William Burke, and MacDermot.

The English power in Connaught continued on the wane; and in 1371, Donnell, son of Brian O'Dowd, drove the English out of Tireragh, captured the castles of Ardnaree and Castleconor, which had been their strongholds in that barony; then divided the lands amongst his brothers and followers. Donnell had succeeded his father in 1354, and died in 1380. In his time the English made various attempts to regain possession of Tireragh, which was the only territory that then remained with the O'Dowds. Although in the Annals, Donnell is described as chief of Tireragh and Tirawley, the latter designation was but the continuation of a fictitious honour, even as the kings of England long clung to the title of kings of France. Donnell was succeeded by his son, Roderick.

In 1381, the castle of Ballylahan was taken by the MacDonoughs; its iron gate was carried away, and erected by them in their fortress of Ballymote. This family appears to have risen suddenly in importance, as frequent reference to them occurs after this date. In 1383, died Tiege MacDonough, chief of Tirerrill, celebrated for his hospitality; he was third in descent from Donough, after whom the MacDonoughs of Tirerrill were named; they were a branch of the MacDermots of Moylurg, in the county Roscommon. O'Flaherty adds that this Teige possessed the region extending from the Yellow River of St. Patrick's mountain to the frontiers of Tir-Tuathail.<sup>1</sup> The county was convulsed with the petty feuds of these chiefs.

In 1384, Donnell O'Connor of Sligo, invaded and burned

<sup>1</sup> "Qui possidebat ab Amne flavo Montis sancti Patricii ad frontem de Tir-Tuathail."

MacDermot's fortress; and the year following, MacDonough, in conjunction with O'Rorke, invaded and ravaged Moylurg, the territory of MacDermot, and sacked his fortress; the son of John O'Hara, together with his brother, fell in an attempt to rescue the spoils. Aided by Felim Cleireach O'Connor, MacDermot retaliated by ravaging Tirerrill; but MacDermot was taken prisoner, O'Connor wounded, and their forces routed. MacDonough, O'Rorke, and O'Connor Don then made an incursion to Roscommon, burned several villages, and cut down the standing crops. The MacDonoughs next committed great depredations in Carra, in Mayo, but here their exploits for the year came to an abrupt conclusion; for overtaken by Cathal Oge O'Connor, the Stauntons, and their allies, the MacDonoughs suffered a severe reverse. Mac William Burke penetrated through Tireragh to Sligo, which he burned, and also pillaged Carbury. In revenge for this incursion, Donnell O'Connor, the MacDonoughs, O'Dowd, and the O'Haras, proceeded the following year (1386) into Mayo, which they plundered in every direction, captured several castles and strongholds, slew MacMyler of Corran, and various other chiefs, but had to retire hastily, O'Connor Roe having created a diversion in favour of Burke, by ravaging Tireragh, thereby necessitating O'Dowd's return.

In 1388,<sup>1</sup> MacDonough made a night expedition to plunder the territory of Moylurg; but MacDermot followed in hot pursuit, overtook, and successfully attacked the rear guard, commanded by MacDonough in person, who, refusing to accept quarter, was slain, and his party routed and pursued across the Curlew mountains as far as Collooney.

Early in the year, Murtogh O'Connor surprised O'Donnell's camp at Assaroe, near Ballyshannon, took many prisoners, and put numbers to the sword. This Murtogh was eldest son of Donnell O'Connor, of Sligo, by a daughter of O'Rorke. According to O'Flaherty, a previous plunder of Carbury by O'Donnell had provoked O'Connor to make this attack. O'Donnell assembled a large force, marched upon Sligo, devastated Carbury, and O'Connor was at length compelled to make peace, pay O'Donnell

<sup>1</sup> In this year, Aine, daughter of Teige MacDonough, wife of Tiarnan O'Rorke, chief of Brefney, died and was buried in Sligo Abbey.

tribute, and restore the prisoners he had carried off from O'Donnell's camp.

Disturbances still continued in the county. In 1389, O'Rorke invaded Sligo, but was encountered at Castleore,<sup>1</sup> in the parish of Killery, barony of Tirerrill, by the cavalry of the O'Healys;<sup>2</sup> the latter were overthrown, and their territory pillaged. Mageoghegan quaintly observes: "The heat of their warrs begott the childe of peace, and so it was concluded firmly of both sides." O'Connor, MacDonough, and the MacDermots followed the good example; a mutual interchange of prisoners took place; the two MacDonoughs captured in the action on the Curlews were released; also Cathal MacDermot, who had been taken prisoner by the MacDonoughs; and with these chiefs O'Connor of Sligo formed an alliance. The O'Conors were perpetually rising against the power and pretensions of the Princes of Tirconnell, yet never succeeded thoroughly, or for any lengthened period, in freeing themselves from the yoke. At the next mention made of O'Connor, he is engaged in pillaging Donegal, the territory of his nominal chief. The confederation of chiefs, however, seems to have been the means of keeping O'Donnell at bay; he did not again enter Carbury till 1395, six years after his patrimony had been pillaged, an insult he would have been prompt to avenge had means of retaliation lain in his power at the time.

In 1390, O'Connor captured and demolished the castle of Kilbarron, near Ballyshannon. This castle belonged to the O'Clerys, bards and historians to the O'Donnells. It was situated on a wild rock, overhanging the Atlantic; some of its ruins yet remain. O'Donnell's feud with O'Neill appears to have enabled O'Connor to harry Tirconnell with impunity.

In 1392, O'Neill invaded it from the east. O'Connor advanced into it from the south, till he reached Kinnaweer, at the head of Mulroy Lough, but he was there met and severely defeated by O'Donnell.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Caislen-an-Uabhair*, i.e., the Castle of Pride.

<sup>2</sup> *Muintir-heilighe*.

<sup>3</sup> In 1393, Hugh MacDermot, chief of Moylurg, died, and through the influence of the MacDonoughs, Mulroony MacDermot was elected in his place. His rivals, sons of Hugh MacDermot, invaded Moylurg, and the



In 1395, O'Donnell, after having defeated O'Neill, turned his arms against O'Connor, invaded his territory, pillaged Carbury, and returned safely to Tirconnell, laden with booty.

On the 1st January, 1396, O'Connor died in the castle of Sligo. It is stated that he was chief of the entire country, from the Curlew mountains northward to the bounds of Donegal. In the spring, O'Donnell returned to Sligo in force, routed and

two forces met in the *callow* of Lough Gara. Mulroony was successful ; the MacDermots shortly afterwards came to an amicable arrangement amongst themselves, and for the time no more is heard of their family contentions. Callow is the name of a townland in the parish of Kilnamanagh, barony of Boyle. Callow (*calla*) has two distinct meanings, reconcilable, however, with each other : (i.) In some parts of Ireland it means a ferry, or landing-place for boats ; (ii.) In Sligo, Roscommon, Galway, and especially along the course of the Shannon, it is used to denote a low marshy meadow, bordering a river or lake, which is often flooded in winter, but always grassy in summer. The modernised form, *callow*, is current as an English word. A "callow meadow" is a very usual country expression.

Turloughs are shallow, temporary lakes, which rise in winter, and disappear in summer ; they vary considerably in extent in different years—sometimes continue during the whole of the summer, and even during a second year. In this respect they differ from the pools which are so commonly formed, especially in flat countries, by winter floods, but which disappear with the returning spring. Turloughs usually occupy shallow basins, and are invariably, it is believed, connected with limestone districts, where fissures in the rocks and swallow holes commonly occur. So long as these vents remain open, the water runs off, and there is no lake ; but when decayed weeds, aquatic plants, &c., are swept away by the first winter floods, and borne towards the vents, by this accumulation the passages become stopped, and remain so until the vegetable matter is entirely decomposed by the returning warmth of summer. Turloughs may likewise be formed if the vents or passages become stopped by back water from subterranean reservoirs, with which they may be connected. When the turlough happens to have a grassy bottom, the most luxuriant crops are obtained by the timely retirement of the waters ; on the other hand, losses and disappointment ensue if the waters unfortunately continue late, or throughout the summer. Turloughs of various sizes occur in different parts of the county, but it would be useless to enumerate them. Within the barony of Leyny they are most numerous. Turlough, Irish *turlach*, has given name to the townland of Turlaghgraun, in the parish of Kilmorgan, barony of Corran.

dispersed a large body of cavalry<sup>1</sup> which attempted to oppose his inroad, pillaged Carbury at his leisure, and then retired to place his spoils in safety. Again O'Donnell, in conjunction with his grandson, Teige O'Conor, marched against Sligo, burned the town, and killed many people. The buildings were constructed of both wood and stone, and the Four Masters describe them as "splendid."

The next year (1397), O'Donnell burned and pillaged the country as far as *Cluan-derg-ratha* (the meadow of the red rath), a townland now sometimes anglicised Derrygra, in Roscommon. O'Donnell's object in these expeditions was to set up as chief his grandson, Teige O'Conor, son of his own daughter, Grainné, in the place of the heir of Donnell O'Conor, then in possession.

MacDonough of Tirerrill, advanced to the plains of Boyle, with his retainers, property, and cattle, in aid of O'Conor Don, his ally. O'Conor Roe, on receiving this intelligence, collected the MacDermots and numerous other allies, surrounded MacDonough's encampment with a large body of cavalry, and although MacDonough made a determined resistance, he was overpowered, his people dispersed, and the cavalry followed up the rout with dreadful carnage. MacDonough fell, together with all the principal chiefs of his party. The victors found a rich booty in the camp, besides horses, weapons, and armour. This was styled the Battle of Kinnitty; it was fought on the 28th September, 1397, and the site lies north of the town of Roscommon.

O'Conor Don, on learning the defeat of his ally, overran the territories of his adversaries, defeated and dispersed them, so that they were compelled to apply to O'Donnell for protection, who, only too glad of the excuse, poured into Carbury a force too strong to be resisted; therefore the inhabitants of that district and Tirerrill retired into the fastnesses and retreats of the county. O'Donnell penetrated as far as *Aenach-Tir-Oiliolla*, now represented by the little village of Heapstown, nestling under the cairn raised as a monument to the memory of Oiliolla.

<sup>1</sup> These were commanded by Melaghlin Caech, or Malachy the Blind, or one-eyed. He was brother of the celebrated Donnell O'Conor, ancestor of O'Conor Sligo, and had two sons, Teige and Loughlin.

It adjoins the well-known locality where the Unshin makes its exit from Lough Arrow, in the townland of Annagh (*Aenach*), or the swamp. *Aenach-Tir-Oiliolla* is also said to signify the fair, or meeting-place, of Tirerrill.

MacDonough, O'Dowd, and O'Hara, perceiving resistance to be useless, made peace with O'Donnell, and gave hostages as security for their good faith. O'Donnell's forces then retraced their steps, and halted at Lissadill, for the purpose of making division of the territory and spoils. A dispute arose, and O'Donnell proceeded to arrange what districts each of the chiefs and sub-chiefs should be put in possession of, now that they had, as it was hoped, totally overcome the resistance of O'Connor of Sligo, *i.e.*, Murtough Bacagh, eldest son of Donnell MacMurtough, lord of Carbury, by Meave, daughter of O'Rorke, who, by the assistance of the O'Rorkes, had been enabled to subdue his rivals, despite the support of their kinsman, O'Donnell.

Murtough Bacagh, unable to cope with his adversary, O'Donnell, had retired with his allies, the O'Rorkes, the MacSweeneys, and O'Hara, to the inaccessible wooded district of *Fassa-Coilleadh*, where he kept watch on O'Donnell's movements. Spies having brought intelligence of the disputes in the camp at Lissadill, Murtough, early on the following morning, advanced to attack O'Donnell, and encamped at *Bunbrenoige* (the mouth of the Brenog, *i.e.*, *stinking inlet or stream*), which was anciently the name applied to the portion of the townland of Lissadill, where was formerly a chapel, close to the strand. *bṛéunóg* is the opposite of *ḡlanóg*; the former means stinking little stream, and the latter clear little stream.<sup>1</sup>

An attempt made by O'Donnell's party to surround their opponents, and cut off their retreat to Sligo, by means of a large body of horse, failed, as they were found to be protected on the one flank by the stream Bunbrenoige, and the tide meantime had flowed in on the other, thus rendering the position unsailable. The struggle was well sustained; at length O'Donnell's force was defeated, and driven in great confusion across the Erne into Donegal, "with great sadness, grief, and sorrow, that a little before were full of mirth, joye, and pleasure, the

<sup>1</sup> MS. *Letters, Ordnance Survey*. These streams are now called the "Bitter" and "Sweet" Waters.



case being so altered with them.”<sup>1</sup> No further mention of O'Donnell, in connection with Sligo, occurs for some time, as this overthrow effectually curbed his power, and O'Conor, in the following year, invaded Tirconnell.

Thomas Burke, with the English of Connaught, O'Conor Roe, O'Dowd, O'Hara, and MacDermot, devastated Tirerrill, and burned even the crannoges on the lakes. MacDermot and O'Conor Roe soon invaded Tirerrill again; their foraging parties reached Moytirra, in the parish of Kilmactranny, celebrated as the scene of the great battle between the Tuatha de Danans and the Fomorians. Here they seized great spoils of cattle, which the troops drove off to Roscommon, leaving but a small force with O'Conor Roe and MacDermot; and whilst thus weakened, they were surprised and easily routed by MacDonough and Murtough Bacagh O'Conor, at *Cnoc-in-croma*.

In retaliation for the defeat O'Conor had inflicted on MacDermot, who at this period was allied with the Burkes, the latter plundered and burned the town of Sligo, when, according to Mageoghegan, they “assaulted the castle of Sligeagh, burnt the whole towne, tooke the spoyles thereof, and ransacked it altogether.”

In 1403 Murtough Bacagh O'Conor, at the solicitation of one of the Burkes, proceeded with a considerable force to the southern portion of Connaught, to subdue the O'Kellys of Galway, and was successful in this enterprise; but in the autumn of the year he died in his castle of Sligo, and was succeeded by his half-brother, Brian. Meave, the daughter of O'Rorke, was mother of the former; Raghnaill, the daughter of O'Donnell, mother of the latter.

In 1407 Brian O'Conor and MacDonough marched into Roscommon, where they levelled the castle of Tulsk; and in 1409 the same chiefs, with all the forces of North Connaught, set out to relieve and provision the beleaguered castle of Roscommon. They expected to have been re-enforced; but at Ballintubber, in Roscommon, they were met by William Burke with only a few horsemen. He advised them to abandon their attempt, as he was unable to afford them assistance against the levies of South

<sup>1</sup> Mageoghegan.

Connaught under O'Connor Roe, who was prepared to oppose the provisioning of the castle. MacDonough replied that though he should fall in the attempt, he would not turn back; he, however, advised Burke to remain at Ballintubber, "for if we are slain (he satirically added) it is agreeable to us that thou shouldst live for our children after us, to maintain them." MacDonough persevered, and was successful in relieving the castle, having cut his way through the blockading force, despite a strenuous opposition. The MacDonoughs were a warlike sept, and when they had no common enemy to contend with, they fought amongst themselves. On the return of the expedition, Malachy MacDonough attacked Teige MacDonough of Moylurg, and took him prisoner; but Teige's followers sprang to arms, routed the invaders, and killed Malachy.

Brian O'Connor seems to have still kept O'Donnell out of his territory, for in 1411 he captured and demolished the castle of Dun-Crimhthannain, in the county of Donegal.

In 1412 he set out with a large force, on a predatory incursion to Gallen, in Mayo, thence to the northern portion of Carra; overran that barony, and also Kilmaine. The Burkes, O'Flahertys, O'Malleys, Barretts, Costellos, and Stauntons assembled to oppose him, but feared to give him battle, and O'Connor continued his devastations, captured and burned the castles at Castlebar, Lehinch, and Loughmask, and after having extorted favourable conditions of peace, returned to Sligo. He next invaded Donegal, plundered the country, and altogether appears to have raised the power of the O'Conors of Sligo to its greatest height.

In 1415 a feud broke out between the O'Haras of East and West Leyny. The Eastern O'Haras were defeated, many of them slain, and, with the usual barbarity of the age, Hugh O'Hara, made prisoner by the victorious party, was hanged.

1416. Taking advantage of these disturbances, Jordan de Exeter attacked the O'Haras, who, assisted by O'Connor, the MacDonoughs, and the cavalry of Carbury, advanced to meet him. Their first encounter with his advance guard was eminently unsuccessful, O'Hara was slain, and most of the chiefs severely wounded. De Exeter then pillaged Leyny, but the levies of the country assembled in considerable force, pursued,

overtook, and utterly discomfited his forces, and De Exeter himself was slain.

In this year the Church of Inishmore, on Lough Gill, was destroyed by fire. This island contains about forty-two acres, and on it are the remains of a church, supposed to have been founded by St. Loman in the sixth century, the time of St. Columbkille. The island derives its Saxon appellation, Church Island, from this ruined fane, situated at its eastern end, and in former years it was the burial-place of the parish of Calry. In a rock, near the door of the church, is a cavity, called "Our Lady's Bed," said to have been a favourite resort of devout women, who imagined that by lying in it, and turning thrice round, at the same time repeating certain prayers, a favourable answer would be granted to their maternal requests. That belief has long ceased, and both the rock and the remains of the church are completely ivy-clad.

In the conflagration of this building, in 1416, many valuable writings and histories were consumed, a loss much to be deplored. Manuscripts (*screaptra*) known to have then perished, were those of the O'Cuirnins. The expression, *teach-screaptra* Colgán renders *Bibliotheca*, Mageoghegan, *library*. The literal translation is, "house of the manuscripts," and the word would seem to have been employed by the old writers in the sense of Biblical Scriptures. O'Donovan was of opinion it meant, in this instance, manuscripts in general, collected by the O'Cuirnins, of which, one book alone, the *Leabhar-Gearr*, or Short Book, is mentioned by name. Various other important documents not specifically named, silver chalices, and musical instruments, also fell a prey to the devouring element. Had these manuscripts survived to the present day, they might have imparted an account of Carbury as complete as that of Tireragh, compiled by the MacFirbises. It was early in this year (1416), that Roderick, grandson of the celebrated Brian O'Dowd, died, and was succeeded by his brother, Teige Riavach O'Dowd, in honour of whom Giolla Iosa More MacFirbis composed his poem on Tireragh.

Despite this loss by fire, Sligo, as compared with other counties of Ireland, was a fruitful soil, from which sprung many manuscripts bearing on history. The "Annals of the Four



Masters" might never have seen the light had not those zealous antiquarians found a patron in a Sligo gentleman, O'Gara, of Coolavin, at whose instigation the compilation was undertaken.

In 1391, just a quarter of a century previous to the conflagration on Church Island, the well-known book of Ballymote, according to Charles O'Connor, of Ballanagar, was written, chiefly by Solomon O'Droma, and Manus O'Duigenan, in the house of Tomaltach Oge MacDonough, Lord of Corran. Like other old works, this MS. is itself a compilation, evidently from various sources, and must, like them, be held to represent to a great extent several compilations of still older date. This large volume, though defective in a few places, still consists of 257 leaves, or 502 pages of the largest folio vellum, equal to about 2,500 pages of the printed "Annals of the Four Masters."

The *Leabhar Buidhe Lecain*, or Yellow Book of Laccan, is a compilation made by the family of MacFirbis; it was written by Donnogh and Giolla Iosa MacFirbis, *circum*. 1390. It is therefore contemporary with the Book of Ballymote.

The "Book of Laccan" was compiled in the year 1416 by Giolla Iosa More MacFirbis, of "Laccan MacFirbis," in the barony of Tireragh, direct ancestor of the learned Duald MacFirbis. In its arrangement and general contents, this MS. differs little from the Book of Ballymote, but contains some important additions; it furnishes much valuable information respecting the families and districts of Tireragh. This part of the work, often referred to in these pages, has been published by the Irish Archæological Society, under the title of "Genealogies, Tribes, and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach."

Of the contents of these manuscripts it may be truly said, that the various treatises of which they are composed are greatly mixed up with mythological fables; they nevertheless afford material of no ordinary value to the historical and antiquarian investigator.

In 1418 Brian O'Connor led a large force into Roscommon to demolish a newly-erected castle, but failed in the attempt. He afterwards marched with the levies of North Connaught into Donegal, to create a diversion in favour of O'Neill, then in alliance with the English, against whom O'Donnell, with his forces, had proceeded to Tyrone. O'Connor pillaged the territory

of O'Donnell, and burned his principal fortress, then returned to Sligo, where Donogh O'Connor, his uncle, died from the effects of a fall in the gateway of Sligo castle.

As a safeguard against the frequent incursions of O'Donnell into Carbury, the erection of a castle was commenced in 1420 by O'Connor, on the banks of the Bundrowse, at this time apparently the extreme northern limit of his territory. O'Donnell's forces assembled to prevent the work; O'Connor called out his levies to protect the workmen, and he was joined by the O'Rorkes and MacDonoughs. The northern army lay encamped on the banks of the *Urscatha*, which was the ancient name of the stream that falls into the sea at the little town of Bundoran. O'Connor dispatched some cavalry to reconnoitre, and they encountered a similar scouting party sent forward by O'Donnell, on the celebrated plain of Magh-g-Cedne, so often mentioned; it is now always called, locally, "the Moy." The Carbury horse were put to flight, and John, son of O'Connor, MacDonough, two of the O'Dowds, with many other chiefs of lesser note, were killed.

On receiving intelligence of this disaster, O'Connor marched to the scene of the skirmish, where he encamped, and five days after, learning that O'Donnell, with his horse, was stationed at *Port-na-long* (*the port of the ships*), on the northern side of the cataract of Assaroe, and that great drinking and carousing were going on in his lines, in celebration of the defeat of the men of Carbury, O'Connor seized on the advantage presented by this negligence on the part of his adversaries, and ordered Owen O'Connor to cross the river, by a ford near Ballyshannon, with the entire body of horse, and to make a night attack on O'Donnell, which proved entirely successful. Donal O'Donnell, heir to the chieftaincy of Tirconnell, was slain; O'Donnell himself was forced to fly to the seashore, and only effected his escape by plunging into the tide, and swimming to an English merchantship which, fortunately for him, happened to be riding at anchor in the harbour. After the victory O'Connor disbanded his forces, and returned to Sligo, where he was met by Donal O'Neill, who had been expelled from Ulster by his rival Owen O'Neill, aided by the O'Donnells.

1421. No alliance amongst the Irish chiefs seems ever to have been of long duration, and to note their various changes of

party is a task as puzzling as it would be to register the changing colours of a Kaleidoscope. O'Rorke and MacDonough had assisted O'Conor in the previous year against O'Donnell; they now quarrelled, the result being that O'Conor lost the support of O'Rorke, who turned to O'Donnell, and with his assistance, burned and plundered Carbury as far as Sligo, where, under the walls of the castle there was a slight skirmish. The northern army then marched into Tirerrill, devastated the country, slew Cathal, son of the MacDonough, with various other chiefs of note, and caused all the flocks and herds to be driven through Brefney to Ballyshannon.

1422. MacDonough and O'Conor, taking advantage of O'Rorke's absence on this errand, swooped down on Dromahair, burned the town, demolished the castle, and destroyed the cattle-folds of the district.

O'Donnell's forces encamped at *Ardfearna* (the eminence of the alder), a hill situated to the east of the castle of Bundrowse, but the name has been long obsolete; the forces of Carbury encamped under the walls of the fortress. There was constant skirmishing between the two armies, and many personal encounters; some few chiefs fell, amongst whom were Murtoigh Boy O'Dowd, and O'Meeny, chief of the sept of that name, residing to the east of the barony of Tireragh; neither party, however, gained decided advantage, and after some time they dispersed.<sup>1</sup>

At *Caisiol Locha Deargain*, now Castledargan, in the parish of Kilross, Conor MacDonough erected a castle on the lands of his nephews, sons of Cormac and Mulroony MacDonough; he destroyed their crops, expelled them from their territory, and compelled them to take refuge with the Burkes; afterwards they sought the aid of O'Donnell, who, glad of the pretext, mustered a large force. The O'Neills, the people of Fermanagh and of Oriel, MacMahon, MacGennis, O'Hanlon, O'Kane, and the English of Ulster, all joined his standard. With these powerful levies he advanced into Carbury, passed the Bundrowse river, under the battlements of the castle, after a slight skirmish, and pillaged the country to the walls of Sligo.

<sup>1</sup> In this year O'Rorke drove the tribe of the MacClanceys out of Leitrim, and they sought refuge with O'Conor in Carbury.



The O'Conors, unable to offer effectual resistance, hung on the rear of their foes, embarrassed their progress, and cut off all stragglers. O'Donnell encamped for a night in *Cuil-irra*, and the following morning advanced into Tireragh, to despoil that country. O'Dowd, appalled at the numbers arrayed against him, made peace with O'Donnell, who then overran Tirerrill and Corran, and committed great devastations. The two MacDonoughs, in alliance with O'Donnell, while assisting in this work, were surprised by their uncle, Conor MacDonough, at *Cluain-gad*, now Cloongad, a townland in the parish of Tawnagh, in Tirerrill. They were defeated with the loss of several chiefs, amongst whom fell Hugh, of *Gaobhcha*, now Geevagh. This ancient district, situated partly in the parish of Kilmastranny, partly in the parish of Shancough, contained the following townlands: Carrowcashel, Tullynure, Straduff, Ballynashee, Knockroe, Glen, Derrysallagh, Rover, Crawhill, and Aughnacloy, in Kilmastranny; Carrowmore, Carrownaclowane, Carrownadargny, Tap, and Ummeryroe, in Shancough. Some, however, consider that the territory comprised the three parishes of Kilmastranny, Shancough, and Killadoon, and such may, probably, have been the ancient extent of this sub-chieftaincy of the MacDonoughs.<sup>1</sup> After pillaging this district and the surrounding country, O'Donnell encamped at Castledargan, then marched against O'Rorke, whom he took prisoner, and finally returned to Donegal, across the river Erne. The events of this year are mixed up and transposed in such an extraordinary manner, that were it not for the Annals of Lough Key, it would be difficult to unravel the tangled skein. O'Donovan, with great justice, remarks: "In most of their lengthened narratives, the Four Masters, like the Epic poets, plunge '*in medias res*,' and afterwards tell the beginning of the story, and the cause of the events in the middle, or at the very end of their narrative."

In 1423, O'Donnell erected a strong castle at Ballyshannon, to protect his own territory against incursions by the O'Conors, also to serve as a check on the castle which guarded the ford over the Bundrowse. His expedition into Sligo seems to have effectually quieted the O'Conors for a lengthened period; no

<sup>1</sup> MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.

disputes between the Connaughtmen and Ulstermen are recorded during the ensuing ten years.<sup>1</sup>

In 1432, however, for the purpose of forming an alliance against O'Donnell, a conference was proposed between O'Neill and the O'Conors, to be held near Ballyshannon on the Erne, each party to be escorted by eighty horsemen. In order to frustrate this arrangement, O'Donnell despatched a picked party of troops to guard the ford across the river. O'Neill, unsuspecting of the ambushade, proceeded to the ford. No sooner had his party landed on the opposite side, than they were attacked and put to flight; but this skirmish did not prevent the intended interview between the contracting parties, who shook hands in confirmation of their alliance. A great struggle now ensued between O'Neill and O'Donnell. Henry, son of the former, proceeded to Sligo in aid of the O'Conors, and with the men of Carbury advanced to "the Moy" (the plain near Ballyshannon), whilst their ally, Thomas Oge Maguire, conveyed a fleet of boats to the narrow part of the Erne, near Castlecaldwell, and ferried them across the stream. Re-enforced by these and other allies, O'Neill marched into Donegal, pitched his camp opposite to that of O'Donnell, and the two forces remained there watching each other. There were daily skirmishes, and several of O'Donnell's villages were burned, but no important action occurred; at length both sides broke up their encampments, and returned to their homes.<sup>2</sup>

1434. On the death of Eignaghan O'Donnell, a feud arose between Nial and his brother, Naghten O'Donnell; each in turn ravaged his adversary's territory, but Naghtan was finally compelled to take refuge in Sligo, with O'Conor, and thereupon Nial plundered Carbury. A succession of petty raids now occurred.

<sup>1</sup> During this period only two events relating to the county are recorded. The unfortunate feud continued amongst the MacDonoughs, and two of their chiefs were murdered; whilst in 1430, Brian O'Conor of Sligo, with Burke of Clanrickard, marched into the barony of Kilmain, in Mayo, and devastated that district.

<sup>2</sup> A severe famine occurred in the summer of 1433, which was designated "the summer of slight acquaintance," for so great was the distress, that no one would recognise friends or relatives, lest they should be expected to feed them.

At one time O'Donnell plundered Sligo; at another, O'Conor plundered Donegal, and these contentions continued till 1440.

In 1435, O'Gara was killed by his own brother on the island of Inisbolg, on Lough Gara. There are eight islands on that lake; *Inisbolg* (the island of the bags) is most probably the one now called simply Inis. In the following year, retributive justice overtook the murderer, Conor O'Gara, who fell in one of the constantly-recurring feuds of the O'Garas and MacDonoughs.

In 1439, died Cathal O'Conor, nominal chief of Connaught, and a dispute arose as to his successor. Teige, son of O'Conor Roe, was nominated by his father's tribe; whilst Hugh, son of O'Conor Don, was nominated by Brian O'Conor of Sligo, his kinsmen, and the MacDonoughs of Tirerrill. The entire county was convulsed by these contentions, further aggravated by a fearful pestilence that raged throughout Ireland, and to which in Sligo great numbers succumbed. The following persons of note fell victims to it: Donough O'Dowd, Conor MacDonough and his family, also the vicar of *Imleach Iseal*, the ancient name of the townland of Castletown; this name was in all probability originally applied to a much larger tract—perhaps to the district over which this vicar ruled, although the name in the present day has dwindled to that of a mere townland. The Irish name is locally forgotten, but it is preserved in the Down Survey of the county. The townland is situated on the western bank of the river Easky, near its mouth.

In 1440, Brian O'Conor, lord of Sligo, died. He held the dignity thirty-seven years, and during that period guarded his territory against all encroachments, more especially from O'Donnell. He was succeeded by Owen O'Conor, who, however, four years after (1444), was killed by the MacDonoughs, in revenge for the death of one of their name, slain in fight, some time previously, by the O'Harts, a sept inhabiting the neighbourhood of Grange, and always faithful supporters of the O'Conors, of Sligo.

It is open to doubt that the O'Harts are quite so ancient a tribe as stated in "Irish Pedigrees." In that work it is stated that our gracious sovereign is one hundred and thirty-sixth in descent from the first man; and in the eighty-first link in the living chain extending from Eden to St. James, is Airt-Ean



Fhear, the one hundred and twelfth monarch of Ireland, son of Con of the Hundred Battles, and ancestor of the O'h-Airt, or O'Harts. The compiler of this genealogy is an O'Hart.

In this year, MacDonough, abbot of Ballysodare, accompanied by many of the clergy of Sligo and Connaught, went to Rome, but the Eternal City does not seem to have agreed with the deputation, for very few of them returned.

In 1445, O'Donnell invaded Carbury, then ruled by Turlough Carrach O'Conor;<sup>1</sup> he burned the town of Sligo, and slew MacDonough of Tirerrill.

In 1446,<sup>2</sup> a dispute arose about the succession to the lordship of Tirerrill. The MacDonoughs appealed to Burke of Clanrickard, to decide the matter; he thereupon divided the territory between two chiefs; one-half of the disputed district he awarded to John, son of Conor MacDonough, and the other to Teige, son of Tomaltach More MacDonough. John died in 1452; and in 1453, Teige, who had been appointed to the other moiety of the divided lordships, was deserted by his friends, and Brian, son of Conor MacDonough, assumed the sole chieftaincy of Tirerrill; but the new MacDonough did not long enjoy his elevation; he died the following year, and was interred in the monastery of Sligo.

Dissensions seem to have been rife in this family. In 1451, Cathal Duv was killed by one of his sept, and Cathal MacDonough was killed by his own father in the heat of a quarrel, in which he flung a skean at him. The same year, Felim O'Conor pillaged O'Gara's territory of Coolavin, and O'Gara seized the flocks and herds of O'Flynn, the Erenagh of Assylin,<sup>3</sup> on the river Boyle.

In 1458, O'Donnell invaded Lower Connaught, pillaged it, and took hostages from the various chiefs, before returning homeward.

In 1461, Manus O'Conor, lord of Carbury, died. In the year following is mentioned the death of Teige, lord of Carbury; also that of Fergal O'Gara, tanist of Coolavin, who fell by the hands

<sup>1</sup> He died 1455.

<sup>2</sup> In 1446, a feud broke out between O'Conor Roe and O'Conor Don; the latter was killed in Coolavin.

<sup>3</sup> See *ante*, p. 4.

of the Costellos of Mayo; whilst in 1464, Donal (son of Murtoth Bacagh) O'Connor, and a great number of his kinsmen, were slain by the followers of Owen O'Connor, Roderick O'Connor being appointed in his place.

1463. Manus MacDonough, at *Muilenn-Adam*, had deprived William Burke of the sight of one of his eyes, who, in retaliation, afterwards besieged the castle; but on his adversary's advance with a large force to its relief, Burke retreated to the neighbourhood of Ballymote, there turned on his pursuers, and killed fifteen of them, including MacDonough. *Muilenn-Adam* signifies *Adam's Mill*; the edifice in question was probably a castle erected on the site of some old fortified mill. It is the first mention of that class of building in Sligo, but mills worked by water were known in very remote ages in the country, and were more numerous in ancient than in modern times. Shortly after the introduction of Christianity, it may be gathered from the lives of the Irish Saints, that several of them erected mills, wishing, perhaps, like St. Paul, not to be a charge on any man, but rather to support themselves by their own handicraft. Long before their advent, however, this kind of mill was used in Ireland.

In 1467 the castle of Collooney was taken from Cormac MacDonough by his rival, Cormac Ballagh MacDonough.

1468. On the death of Tiarnan Oge O'Rorke, chief of Brefney, Donal O'Rorke, through the influence of O'Donnell, was elected his successor; but some of the Brefsnians, dissatisfied with the appointment, and aided by the men of Carbury and the MacDonoughs of Tirerrill, set up Donogh Losg O'Rorke. On receiving intelligence of the opposition thus raised against his nominee, O'Donnell crossed the Erne, pillaged North Connaught, and committed great depredations, especially in the northern part of Leyny, in *Cuil-Cnamh*, and *Coillte-Iuighne*, the flocks and herds being driven off across the Erne. The English, with Burke and O'Connor Don, advanced for the purpose of expelling O'Donnell from Sligo; they burned Dromahair, "the town of O'Rorke," but were unable to bring him to an engagement. He seems, nevertheless, to have had the worst of the struggle, for shortly afterwards he delivered up to Murtoth Bacagh<sup>1</sup> O'Connor the castle of Bundrowse, which had been in

<sup>1</sup> *Bacagh*, i.e., the lame.

his possession. The following year O'Donnell returned, overran Sligo, received hostages from the chiefs, and re-enforced by their levies, he penetrated through the territory of the Burkes, as far as the barony of Clare, in Galway, and returned to the north laden with booty, despite the vigorous attacks made on his rear guard.

The power and prestige of the O'Conors of Sligo received from O'Donnell, in 1470, a crushing blow. After a prolonged siege, he captured the castle of Sligo from Donnel O'Connor, from whom he exacted a heavy fine, besides submission to him as Lord Paramount, and a regulated tribute from off all the lands in his possession. O'Donnell also recaptured "the chairs" (probably the banqueting or coronation seats) of Donal Oge O'Donnell, which had been carried off by the Connaughtmen in the time of John O'Donnell<sup>1</sup> and retained as trophies. He likewise regained two ancient Irish manuscripts, one called the *Leabhar Gearr*,<sup>2</sup> or Short Book, a work of some note, now unfortunately lost;<sup>3</sup> the other called *Leabhar-na-Huidhre*, which is still extant. It is written on vellum, and transcribed from an old record of the twelfth century, by Maolmuire, a learned scribe of the Abbey of Clonmacnois. It is now deposited in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, and is considered to be a very valuable work on Irish history and antiquities. It contains a very curious and interesting account of the cemeteries and sepulchres of the Pagan Kings of Ireland. Extracts made from it by O'Donovan have been quoted in this work.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> The *Leabhar-Gearr* (of the O'Cuirnins) is stated by the Four Masters to have perished in the conflagration of the church on Inishmore, in A.D. 1416. The one now in question may have been a transcript of the original. Its companion manuscript, the *Leabhar-na-Huidhre*, contains two curious memoranda on fol. 35 (now 18), one of them in the handwriting of Sighraidh O'Cuirnin, written in 1345, when the book was in the possession of Donnel O'Connor, and the other in a more modern hand, stating how the two books above referred to were recovered by O'Donnell, after they had been in the possession of the O'Conors of Sligo during the reigns of ten successive lords of Carbury.—*O'Donovan's Notes*.

<sup>3</sup> O'Donovan.

<sup>4</sup> In this same year (1470), Brian MacDonough, lord of Ballymote, was killed by Teige MacDonough, who captured the castle. In 1474, at a conference held between O'Connor Don and O'Kelly, the former was



1471. Some of the inhabitants of Carbury, dissatisfied at the submission of Donal O'Connor to O'Donnell, elected Rory O'Connor to be their chief, whereupon O'Donnell committed great depredations in Carbury, and also on the MacDonoughs in Tirerrill. Burke espoused the cause of Rory, and attacked the castle of Sligo, which was defended by Donal O'Connor in person. Burke made some slight progress with the siege, and succeeded in demolishing the gate tower, but finally a truce was agreed upon. It may be inferred that Cosnamhach O'Dowd had joined Burke in this expedition, for O'Donnell re-entered Sligo, and laid waste all the portion of Tireragh which belonged to that chief.

His tribute, or rent, not being paid with punctuality, O'Donnell, in 1473, advanced on Sligo, encamped close to the town, and exacted payment from his unwilling vassal.<sup>1</sup>

In 1475, O'Donnell, accompanied by numerous allies and the Sligo chiefs, made a long and circuitous campaign through Cavan, Leitrim, Westmeath, King's County, Galway, and Mayo, returning through Roscommon and Sligo to his own territory.

1476. But the tide of war in the following year set against O'Donnell; Burke, whose lands he had ravaged, marched into Sligo to expel him; his army was posted at *Cuil-Cnamhe*, i.e., the parish of Dromard. A small lough, in the townland of Barnabrack,<sup>2</sup> called *Lochán Cúile-Cnamhe* (the little lake of the corner of the bones), preserves the name of the old district, and O'Donnell's tents were, probably, reflected in its waters. Burke moved forward his force, and encamped in the woods of *Coillte Luighne*, where he was re-enforced by MacDermot, whilst MacDonough supported the cause of O'Donnell. A glance at the map will show that the position occupied by Burke<sup>3</sup> effectually

accompanied by MacDonough's levies. A dispute arose, which ended in a battle. O'Connor was defeated, and died of his wounds. The constable of MacDonough was taken prisoner, and all his gallowglasses were either slain or captured.

<sup>1</sup> In 1474, Gilla Duv O'Hara, son of the chief of his name, was killed by his own brother.

<sup>2</sup> I.e., speckled gap or pass.

<sup>3</sup> Somewhere in the townlands of Lugnadeffa, Mullanashee, Crockacullion, and Larkhill, part of the ancient district of Coillte-Luighne.

threatened O'Donnell's communications with Sligo, and the latter, finding himself out-manceuvred and out-numbered, essayed to steal, unperceived, across "the ford of the white strand,"<sup>1</sup> i.e., Traholly Strand, near Ballysodare, and in effecting this retreat into Cuil-irra he lost a great many men and horses. Here both sides lay facing each other for a considerable time; finally, a peace was made, unfavourable to O'Donnell, a fact which ought to be carefully noted, as forming altogether a new departure.

Sligo was divided between the rival claimants into two portions: Tireragh (O'Dowd's territory), Leyny (O'Hara's territory), and part of Southern Carbury (O'Connor's territory), were all allotted to Burke. The remaining portions of Sligo, including the Town, the Castle, Northern Carbury, Tirerrill, and Corran (MacDonough's territory), and Coolavin (O'Gara's territory), were allotted to O'Donnell. This war seems to have crippled the power of O'Donnell in Sligo; it was thirteen years before he again entered Carbury;<sup>2</sup> and, in the meantime, he lost several of its more important strongholds, for in 1478 Burke besieged and captured the castle of Sligo from O'Donnell, and gave it in custody to the sept of Brian O'Connor. The Annals of Lough Key, however, state with more apparent probability that he left the stronghold in charge of his own son. Sligo now seems to have enjoyed for a considerable period comparative repose and prosperity.<sup>3</sup>

In 1487, whilst O'Donnell was besieging the castle of *Cairthe*,

<sup>1</sup> *Fearsaid-na-Fionn-tragha*. O'Donovan identifies this fearsat with *Traigh Eothuile*; but other writers state it is the ancient name of the strand which stretches from Abbeytown into *Cuil-irra*.

<sup>2</sup> I.e., in 1489, when two of the septs of the O'Conors of Carbury, having committed great atrocities on each other, he marched into the barony to enforce quiet.

<sup>3</sup> There were, however, a few raids and murders, such as those of Fergal O'Gara, killed by the MacDermots, in 1482; Dermot O'Hara, killed by the sept of O'Hara Boy, in 1486; Malachy and Roderick MacDonough, killed by another sept of the same name. In 1487, Donal O'Connor and MacDonough made an incursion into Mayo, but were defeated, and two of the MacDonoughs, with several other chiefs, were slain. In 1488, John Oge O'Hara and his son were murdered by his nephews, on a Sunday, in the monastery of Banada.

or Car, situated in the valley of Glen Car, but within the bounds of the present county of Leitrim, and then held by a sept of the O'Rorkes who had rebelled against his authority; he killed Brian O'Rorke by "the shot of a ball." This appears to refer to a wound inflicted by firearms, and it is the first mention of the use of such implements of warfare in the neighbourhood of Sligo. According to the Annals of Dublin, the first muskets, or firearms, seen in Dublin were brought in the year 1489 (two years subsequent to the above incident), from Germany, and presented to the Earl of Kildare, then Lord Deputy; with these he armed the guards, who stood as sentinels before his house in Thomas Street, Dublin. Few soldiers of that age could have imagined the revolution in warfare to be effected by these clumsy-looking weapons.

The weapon by which Brian O'Rorke was slain was, probably, the "hackbut," which was then coming into use. It was an improved matchlock; to this latter had now been added a wheel-lock, *i.e.*, a small apparatus for producing sparks by the rapid revolution of a wheel against a piece of sulphate of iron, held like the flint of the more modern musket.

A new era in the art of war had been inaugurated in 1346, for with the army of Edward III., in his invasion of France, were five pieces of small cannon; previous even to this, cannon are mentioned as having been used in a sea engagement in the thirteenth century, between the Ruler of Tunis, and a Moorish King of Seville.

The *Dictionnaire Militaire* (printed 1758) asserts that cannon were known in France, according to some authors, in 1338, but known of only. The primitive cannon were without trunnions, and as they lay on a species of slide, or trough, they could neither be depressed nor elevated. Richard II. had no less than 400 such pieces at St. Malo, in 1378; but it was not until the sixteenth century that field guns could be moved with requisite ease and expedition. In the reign of Henry VI. are found the first indications of an important change in warfare. So early as 1446, an iron tube, called a hand cannon, fixed to a wooden stock, with a touch-hole on the top, and a pan to hold powder, was used in England. It was called a "gonne."

In 1490, an eruption of earth, or landslip (*Maidhm talmhan*),



occurred on the slopes of the Ox mountains, above Lough Easky (*Loch-na-ngabhar Iask*), which caused the death of the son of Manus Crossagh O'Hara, and of about one hundred people, together with numerous flocks and herds. The Annals also state that a quantity of putrid fish was cast up by the eruption, and that the lake "since remains in that place." By the latter statement, the annalists seem to imply that the lake had not existed previous to the earth-avalanche; but putrid fish were cast up by the descent of this mountain mass, and the piscine tribe cannot exist without water. This curtailment, or extension, of the previously existent sheet of water, may be classed with the greater eruptions of Lough Neagh, Lough Erne, and various other lakes throughout Ireland, as recorded by ancient historians. A vivid tradition still prevails in the county of Sligo of an erupted lake in the parish of Killoran; it is now dried up, but has left its name in the townland of Moymlough, in Irish, *Maidhm-loch* (the erupted lake). The eruption was apparently of similar character with the phenomena of the moving bogs of modern times in Ireland, which, by the action of subterranean waters, have suddenly burst forth in semi-liquid form, and overflowed extensive tracts of land. Confirmatory of this theory, there is a statement in the Annals that very wet and stormy weather continued without intermission from summer to harvest, so that the corn crops of the kingdom failed. This large rainfall, percolating between the hard impervious formation of the mountain side, and the superincumbent strata, may have caused a dislodgment on the slopes of the Ox range similar in its nature to the frightful landslips which so frequently occur in the Alpine valleys, and on the Himalayan range, by which entire villages with their inhabitants are suddenly overwhelmed.

There are generally signs and warnings, heralding these catastrophes, were people but capable of reading them aright. The earth gapes in places, cracks open in every direction, from some of which water commences to issue, finally, the undermined slope descends with a thundering crash.

Family feuds still continued amongst the MacDonoughs.

In 1492, Teige and Cormac MacDonough fell in single combat, in the district of Geevagh, whilst a great number of combatants on both sides were wounded.

In 1493, Donal O'Connor, lord of Sligo, was summoned by his chief, O'Donnell, to aid in an expedition against O'Neill, whose territory was plundered, and his forces overthrown, in the Mourne mountains, county of Down.

1494. Shortly after his return to Sligo from this successful campaign, O'Connor was slain within the bawn, or fortified enclosure of the castle of Buninna, in the parish of Dromard, barony of Tireragh, by John and Brian, sons of Roderick O'Connor. The latter assumed the dignity thus rendered vacant, possessed himself of the castle of Sligo, and of all the territory from the Curlew range to the river Bunduff; this corresponds in extent to the bounds of the present county. The change of rulers in Sligo seems to have been equally distasteful to O'Donnell and to Burke; they combined their forces, and laid siege to the castle of Sligo, garrisoned by Brian Caoch, and Calvach Caoch O'Connor, with the "*Muintir Airt*," which was the Irish tribal name of the O'Harts, whose country extended from Ben-Bulbin to the river Drowes.

The castle of Sligo was strong and well defended; the siege lasted a considerable time, but at length the combined forces, after suffering various severe repulses, were compelled to break up their encampment and retire discomfited.

The death of Roderick O'Connor, in 1495, was followed by the invariable dispute with regard to the succession; in a fight at Drumcliff between the rivals, Felim O'Connor proved victorious, and came into possession. O'Donnell himself was at that time absent in Scotland, endeavouring to obtain assistance from the Scottish monarch; but his son Con moved into Carbury, and laid siege to the town and castle of Sligo. Felim O'Connor raised a levy to relieve the town; he was joined by MacDermot of Moylurg, the O'Dowds of Tireragh, the MacDonoughs of Tirerill and Corran, and the tribes of Coolavin. Con O'Donnell left his lines, and with O'Rorke, and the tribe of Donal Cam MacDonough, advanced to Belladrihed<sup>1</sup> to meet them, leaving a covering party behind to guard against a diversion from the garrison, or the destruction of his camp. The arrival of O'Donnell at the moment the opposing forces were on the point of

<sup>1</sup> *Beul-an-droiched*.

engaging, increased the ardour of his party. On landing at Donegal from Scotland he had learned the danger in which his son was placed, and hastened to his assistance. Inspired by the presence and bearing of O'Donnell, his forces totally defeated their opponents, of whom great numbers were slain. Amongst those of most note were Teige MacDonough of Tirerrill, Owen Caoch O'Dowd of Tireragh, Brian Caoch, Teige and Cian O'Gara, and O'Gara chief of Coolavin. This battle was called the defeat of *Ceidech-drainech*, i.e., "thorny hillocks." It is close to the present bridge at Belladrihed, and is now called Keadydrinagh. O'Donnell plundered all the surrounding country at his leisure, the various chiefs vying with each other in anxiety to tender him their allegiance. On receiving their submission, O'Donnell retired to Donegal. Shortly afterwards, Burke of Clanrickard marched into Sligo plundering, and devastating the districts which had been either spared by O'Donnell, or had escaped the ravages of his troops. Burke expelled O'Donnell's garrison from the castle of Sligo, and burned "the castle of the sons of Hugh, son of Donnell Cam MacDonough,<sup>1</sup> in which fifteen persons, both men and women, were smothered by the smoke, and among the rest, a beautiful young woman, the daughter of Hugh, son of Donnell Cam."<sup>2</sup>

1496. The defeat of Felim O'Connor, and the ravaging of his territory immediately afterwards by Burke, had the effect of totally destroying his authority over his vassals, and a reign of anarchy ensued. O'Donnell therefore entered Carbury, and re-instated Felim O'Connor in all his former possessions, with the exception of the important castle of Sligo, which he left in the custody of Calvach Caoch O'Connor.

The following year (1497), O'Donnell marched against MacDermot of Moylurg, who sturdily refused to yield him tribute. Felim O'Connor, who was indebted to him for his position, together with O'Rorke of Brefney, were the only Connaught chiefs who joined O'Donnell's standard. MacDermot assembled his forces in the dense woods of the Curlew mountains, through

<sup>1</sup> Somewhere in Tirerrill, Teige, a son of Donnell Cam MacDonough, was elected chief of Tirerrill, in the place of the MacDonough who fell in the engagement of Belladrihed.

<sup>2</sup> Annals of Ulster.



which O'Donnell must necessarily pass in order to invade his territory, and he was joined by the two O'Conors of Roscommon. His position defended the pass of Ballaghboy<sup>1</sup> (the "Yellow Pass"), the celebrated mountain defile in the parish of Aghanagh, barony of Tirerrill. O'Donnell's path lay along the *Bothar-an-Iarla-Ruaidh* (the Red Earl's Road), still so called by the country-people, under the traditional belief that the causeway was made by the celebrated Earl of Ulster. It was the ancient route to Sligo over the Curlews, through the townlands of Spafield, Garroo, Ballaghboy (which preserves the name), Cartron, Ballinafad, Mountgafney, and Dunnaveeragh; it seems to have resembled the mule tracks still to be seen in Spain.

It is stated that O'Donnell was successful at first, and forced the pass, by which term is probably meant the narrow and contracted gorge in Doonaveeragh; but his troops, thrown into confusion by their own impetuosity, either fell into an ambuscade, or were drawn on by their opponents to the barricaded and intrenched position at Ballaghboy; and although O'Donnell managed to effect his own escape, yet most of his chiefs were taken prisoners. Felim O'Connor, the two MacSweeneys, Donagh-na-nordog (of the thumbs) son of O'Donnell, John and Torlogh O'Gallagher, five MacSweeneys of Donegal, Gerald O'Dogherty physician to O'Donnell, and MacDunlevey, were all captured. The overthrow was most complete; upwards of 800 of the Northern force were slain, and the celebrated *Cathach*, or standard of the O'Donnells, fell into the hands of the victors, the guard laying down their lives in its defence.<sup>2</sup> MacDermot likewise captured all baggage and military stores, together with standards, drums, armour, horses, and horse equipment. Shortly afterwards, Felim O'Connor was set at liberty by MacDermot, on agreeing to give as ransom a fifth share of *Cuan-Sligigh* (the harbour of Sligo), which was, perhaps, the name by which the part of the barony of Carbury bordering on the harbour of Sligo was at that time familiarly known. As sureties for the fulfilment of these terms, the sons of Teige MacDonough were given

<sup>1</sup> *Beallach-buidhe*.

<sup>2</sup> The family of Magroarty seem to have been the hereditary standard-bearers of this relic.

to MacDermot as hostages; and in the event of their escape, or his own non-compliance with the terms, Felim was to deliver over 120 milch cows. As a result of the commotions which prevailed all over the kingdom, a dreadful famine occurred in this and the following year, so that great numbers died, and the survivors had but the vilest of garbage on which to support life.

In 1499, Donogh-na-nordog O'Donnell, who two years previously had been taken prisoner by MacDermot at the battle of the Curlews, but afterwards released, at this period captured the castle of Bundrowse from his own father, O'Donnell, who, aided by Maguire, at once proceeded to besiege it. A personal encounter ensued under the walls, between Maguire and Donagh-na-nordog, in which "they pummelled each other;" but Maguire having killed the horse of his adversary, succeeded in making him prisoner. The castle then capitulated, and O'Donnell presented Maguire with sixty milch cows, as reward for his skill and valour, and persuaded him to convey his son, Donagh-na-nordog, to Brefney, to be there detained in confinement. O'Donnell, who was still at war with MacDermot, shortly afterwards made a forced march to the "Yellow Pass," over the Curlew mountains, for the purpose of attacking MacDermot; but the latter having received timely information, O'Donnell found himself opposed by a formidable force, in the same position which had so recently proved disastrous to him. Taught by experience, he did not attempt to force the pass, but proceeded through the barony of Leitrim, crossed the Shannon, entered Moylurg, and commenced to plunder that district. MacDermot, out-generalled and out-numbered, made the best terms then in his power—agreed to pay tribute to O'Donnell, to give up the hostages surrendered to him in exchange for the chiefs captured at the battle of Ballaghboy, and also to restore the *Cathach*, or standard of the O'Donnells, the recovery of which was probably more highly prized by the victors than either of the other conditions.

In 1500, O'Donnell assisted the Lord Justice Thomas, Earl of Kildare, against O'Neill. After his return from that expedition, he invaded Tirerrill, and plundered the tribe of Brian MacDonough, as a punishment for rebellion against his authority.



The following year (1501) the castle of Sligo was captured from Calvach Caoch O'Connor, who fell in the defence, but not before he had slain John O'Connor, one of the assailants. The surprise was effected by escalade, favoured by the darkness, the successful party being the tribe of the O'Conors, who had been deprived of the custody of the fortress by O'Donnell in 1496.

In 1508, O'Donnell marched to Sligo, and carried away hostages to Donegal.

1511. Farrel MacDonough, chief of Tirerrill, was slain in his castle of Ballindoon by the tribe of Roderick MacDermot. The MacDermots and the MacDonoughs, although in this age so frequently in antagonism, were of the same origin; the tribal name of both families was Clann or Muintir *Maelruainaidh*, the O'Duigennans of Kilronan, in Roscommon, being hereditary historians for these tribes. The following entry in the "Book of Ballymote" shows the pedigree of these families, as also the extent of the MacDonough's territories about A.D. 1390, when that book was compiled: "Tomaltach was King of *Airtech*, *Tir-oilell*, the two Coranns, the five ballys of *Clann-Fearmuighe* and of *Tir-Tuathail*, at the time this book was in the progress of transcription."

Tomaltach MacDonough's pedigree runs thus: Tomaltach (A.D. 1390), the son of Teige, son of Tomaltach, son of Maurice, son of Donough (*a quo* MacDonough), son of Tomaltach, son of Conor, son of Dermot (*a quo* MacDermot), son of Teige, son of Mulroony, son of Teige, son of Murtagh, son of *Maelruinaidh-more* (A.D. 1030), from whom the Clan-Mulroony.

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## BOOK V.

### CHAPTERS VII., VIII., IX.

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CHAP. VII. RISE OF ENGLISH POWER.

VIII. CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS REFORMATION.  
THE SPANISH ARMADA.

IX. ELIZABETHAN WARS.







## BOOK V.

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### CHAPTER VII.

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#### RISE OF ENGLISH POWER.

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“Not in vain the distance beckons,  
Forward, forward let us range;  
Let the people spin for ever  
Down the ringing grooves of change.”



FROM the time of Henry VII. may be dated the rise of English power in Ireland. The reign of Henry VIII. ushers in a new era. It is, therefore, well to pause and endeavour to form a general idea of the state of the country at the beginning of the sixteenth century. A report presented to King Henry VIII. is peculiarly interesting and instructive; it gives a life-like picture of Irish society in 1513.<sup>1</sup> At that period, English rule did not embrace more than the five counties of Dublin, Louth, Meath, Kildare, and Wexford. The rest of the country was divided between “Irish enemies” and “English rebels.” The latter term was used to designate families of Anglo-Norman descent, who had adopted Irish customs, laws, and language, “noble Normans sunk into savagery, *Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores.*” The Pale had not encroached on the Irish. On the contrary, the Irish had encroached on the Pale. According to the State document in question, the Irish still held above sixty separate states, or districts, which varied considerably in extent. These were governed by “more than sixty chief captains,

<sup>1</sup> It is printed in the State Papers.

whereof some call themselves kings, some kings' peers in their language, some princes, some dukes, some archdukes, that live only by the sword, and obey no other temporal person but only him that is strong." From the enumeration of names of Irish chiefs in the document, those belonging to Sligo are selected: "M'Donough, O'Gara, O'Hare, O'Dowdy, and M'Manus O'Connor." Each chief assumed the right of making peace or war at his own pleasure. Some of the more powerful might have been able to bring two thousand well-armed troops into the field, exclusive of the undisciplined rabble which usually accompanied an army in considerable numbers; but the average array of a sept consisted of about 200 spearmen and 600 kerns. The septs were seldom in accord with their nominal lord, "but commonly rebelleth always against their chief captain." No one chief had power to summon the others to take the field, or to bind them by treaty; and if any of them, by his valour, obtained ascendancy, it was useless to impose obligations on the successors of the vanquished, still less on his own successor, for the *roydama*, or heir apparent, generally sought the opportunity of reversing his predecessor's policy. Force was law, might was right, the will of the chief was supreme *in so far as it accorded with that of the sept*.

Turning from the "Irish enemies" to the "English rebels," the writer of the Report states that "There were more than thirty great captains of the English noble folk, that follow the same Irish order, and keep the same rule," &c. The English families of Connaught who had "degenerated" into Irish habits, were the Lord Burke of Mayo, the Lord Burke of Clanrickard, the Lord Bermingham of Athenry, the Stauntons in Mayo, the Jordans, Costellos, Nangles, and Barretts, of Tirawley.

It is a misnomer to designate Ireland as a kingdom. Even prior to the date of the Danish invasion it had been in a state of almost chronic anarchy. At one time, indeed, a nominal monarch was acknowledged, whose power, however, seldom made itself felt outside of his own immediate principality. History repeats itself; and it may be observed that, as at the time of the Danish and Anglo-Norman conquests, so at the final settlement of the kingdom, invasion and conquest were easy



achievements for a well-organised, well-armed minority, holding one object in view, and guided by one will.

Notwithstanding the deterioration of English manners and customs, it is possible that the English language made greater advance amongst the population of Connaught than is generally supposed. It was only in the fourteenth century that the people of England began to speak a language which may be termed English, although not understood in the present day, without the aid of a glossary; and without similar aid, Chaucer, who died A.D. 1400, is in places unintelligible. If this be borne in mind, the "comen English tong," then used in the West of Ireland, may be considered passing good. Amongst the earliest specimens of written English found in Connaught are the two following documents here given, as they relate to Sligo:—<sup>1</sup>

"*Dede of delyveraunce of vi. marc x<sup>s</sup>. to Sandere lynche & al.* A.D. 1430. Knowynge be thus to alle men yn time to comyng that y henry Blake and Walter Blake custumers of y<sup>e</sup> Kyng & John Rede countroller of y<sup>e</sup> porte of y<sup>e</sup> Galvy and of Slego haye ymade delyveraunce to Saunder lynche et Davy Botyller vi. marc x<sup>s</sup>. y<sup>e</sup> wych y<sup>e</sup> for sayde Saunder lynche et Davy Botyller was owing of a tayll of xx. marc to McWylliam y<sup>t</sup> now ys and of y<sup>e</sup> wiche some above ysayde we knowlich Saunder lynche & Davy Botyller full payde & y<sup>e</sup> for sayde henry Blake Walter Blake and John Rede yere of quyte. In y<sup>e</sup> wyttenys her of Soverayne and portreve of y<sup>e</sup> Galvy & many mo. And her to y<sup>e</sup> for sayde Saunder and Davy have put to har seals. Iwrote at y<sup>e</sup> Galvy y<sup>e</sup> xx<sup>ti</sup> day of August. The yere regnyng of Kyng henry y<sup>e</sup> VI after y<sup>e</sup> conquest ye viii. yer.—"

The second deed bears date nineteen years later:—

"*Mayst Manes M'Donkyth ys dede.* A.D. 1449."

"Be hit knowyng to all maner men yat yis present endentur seyth or hyreth yat y mayster manes M'Donkyth yevyth my full power & my patent to McWilliam of Clanrycard of ye xl. marc yat my lyge lord Kyng hath yeve to me of ye Cokket of Galvey & of Sligo as frely as y had hit on yis condyssioun yat y or myn attorney schall have every yere of ye forseyd

<sup>1</sup> From Hardiman's Notes to "Iar Connaught," pp. 203-5.



M<sup>c</sup>William or his attorneys what profet comyth of ye cokket bi a halfe at Galvey & halfe at Sligo y to pay ye fyses of ye vi Ii as hit comyth to and in record yat yis trew y ye forseyd maister manes to yis present endentur put to my sele Iwrite at Galvey ye xxvi day of March in ye yer of our lord M<sup>c</sup>CCCC<sup>o</sup> et xlix yer.—”

As at the close of the last chapter, so now, when the narration of events is again resumed, the various chiefs are found engaged in never-ending quarrels amongst themselves. There was no one sufficiently powerful to controul their suicidal violence and faithlessness, or to receive the submission of those who might be willing to submit in return for protection.

In 1512, O'Donnell, in preparation for an encounter with O'Neill and Burke, hired fifteen hundred battle-axe men, or heavy-armed infantry, and gave them *Bonaght*, or free quarters, in Tirconnell and Sligo. The presence of bands of mercenary gallowglasses must have injured the character of the sept itself, if it be regarded as a union of patriarchal affection between chief and clansmen.

With his forces thus strengthened, O'Donnell besieged and captured the castle of Ballinclare,<sup>1</sup> in the present townland of Belclare, in the parish of Kilmacteige, barony of Leyny. This castle defended the road from Foxford and Swinford to Aclare, and is said to have been erected by the family of O'Hara. After having garrisoned the post, O'Donnell passed through the defiles of the Ox mountains into Tireragh, and remained some time in that barony. Burke, taking advantage of his absence, proceeded to besiege Ballinclare Castle, but O'Donnell promptly marched to the relief of his garrison. Burke broke up the leaguer, made a flank march into Tireragh, thus left unguarded, and took the castle of Inishcroane<sup>2</sup> from the chief into whose custody it had been committed. He provisioned the fortress, left it in charge of his son, Ulick Burke; then hastily retreated to Ardnaree, on ascertaining that O'Donnell, by that time aware that he had been out-manceuvred, was rapidly recrossing the Ox mountains.

<sup>1</sup> *Beol-an-chlair*. In Dockwra's "Account of Services done in Connaught by Sir Richard Bingham," the castle is there stated to be seven miles from the Abbey of Banada, and eight miles from Ardnaree.

<sup>2</sup> *Esker-abhann*.

Burke barely succeeded in effecting his retreat ; he was pursued by O'Donnell's horse, and suffered severe loss whilst crossing the Moy.

The castle of Inisheroane held out four days before it surrendered, on condition of quarter to the defenders, but Ulick Burke was detained a prisoner. The castle was razed. The "Four Masters" indicate the manner in which this was done, and as similar means must have been employed in the dismantling of fortresses before the introduction of "villainous saltpetre," it may be well to describe it. A breach was made in one of the walls towards its base, in order to introduce a prop wherewith to sustain the superincumbent weight whilst men were engaged in undermining the adjoining mason-work, under which again a similar prop was introduced, and so on till the entire base of the walls of the building was removed. The props were then dragged from underneath by means of ropes pulled by men or horses, and the edifice tumbled, often without breaking into fragments.

O'Donnell returned in triumph to Tirconnell, and shortly afterwards Burke, in order to procure the release of his son, yielded to O'Donnell's demands.

The chiefs of Sligo accompanied O'Donnell against O'Neill, and assisted in the burning and devastation of Tyrone ; thus, successful over both his foes, O'Donnell proceeded southwards, to the Curlew mountains, to pay homage to the Earl of Kildare, Lord Justice of Ireland, who had marched into Connaught with a large force ; when returning to his camp at Bricklieve,<sup>1</sup> some of his men were surprised, and cut off, in the "Yellow Pass," by whom is not stated ; it may be inferred that the assailants were the O'Conors, for against them O'Donnell now turned his arms, and pillaged Carbury, but failed in his attempt on the castle of Sligo.

The following year (1513) O'Donnell returned in even greater force, and besieged the castle of Sligo for a lengthened period ; but after several repulses, and the loss of many important chiefs, he broke up his camp in sullen anger ; and on return to his principality, he hanged Owen O'Connor, for the murder of his

<sup>1</sup> *Brec-Slieve*, a castle in the parish of Aghanagh, barony of Tirerrill.

brother Cathal Oge, near Ballygilgan;<sup>1</sup> these brothers probably belonged to the sept of the O'Conors of Northern Carbury.

During three years O'Donnell made no further attempt to capture Sligo castle. Accident at length placed in his hands the means of taking it.

In 1516, a French knight, on pilgrimage to that locality, so celebrated in Mediæval History, St. Patrick's purgatory of Lough Derg,<sup>2</sup> formed a friendship with the northern chief, and thus learned his great anxiety to take Sligo. The knight promised, on his return to "la belle France," to provide O'Donnell with heavy ordnance, and a siege train. The stores arrived at Killybegs, the battering train was despatched by water to Sligo, and after a protracted siege, several breaches having been effected, the garrison surrendered on promise of quarter; the town, however, was totally destroyed.

After this O'Donnell, in a single day, captured the castles of Collooney, Castledargan, and Doonamurray;<sup>3</sup> he garrisoned them with his own troops, took hostages from several chiefs, and returned in triumph to Tirconnell. On their way to make submission to O'Donnell, MacDonough of Ballymote and his son were slain by O'Boyle, one of his chiefs.

For a period of five years Sligo must have enjoyed perfect repose; the only mention in reference to it contained in the Annals is the death, in 1519, of Felim O'Connor, lord of North Carbury.

In 1522, hostilities broke out in Ulster between O'Donnell

<sup>1</sup> *Baile-Ui-Ghiolgain*, i.e., O'Gilgan's town, a townland in the parish of Drumcliff, barony of Carbury, now Ballygilgan.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Lanigan says: "This Purgatory, or purging place of Lough Derg (Donegal), was set up against another Patrick's Purgatory—viz., that of Croagh Patrick, mentioned by Jocelyn, which, however ill-founded the vulgar opinion concerning it, was less objectionable. Some writers have said that it got the name of Patrick's Purgatory from an Abbot Patrick that lived in the ninth century; but neither were there Canons Regular of St. Augustine at that time, nor were such abridged modes of atoning to the Almighty for the sins of a whole life then thought of. It was demolished in the year 1497, by order of the Pope, although it has since been in some manner restored."—"Ecclesiastical History of Ireland," vol. i., p. 368.

<sup>3</sup> *Dun-na-mona*, i.e., the fort of the bog. This castle is situated in the parish of Kilross, barony of Tirerrill. In the deed of partition of the Sligo Estate, 1687, it is called Downamory, *alias* Downamony.



and O'Neill. The latter captured the castles of Ballyshannon, Belleek, and Bundrowse, and he was promised support by the Connaughtmen. Sligo formed the only barrier to their advance into Tirconnell, they therefore laid siege to it, and carried it on with vigour; but the fortress was ably defended by O'Donnell's garrison. He himself lay encamped in a strong pass near Strabane, county Donegal. O'Neill had more considerable forces, and was intrenched with numerous English and Scotch auxiliaries, on the hill of Knockavoe, in the same neighbourhood, expecting to be joined, on the fall of Sligo, by the large army from Connaught. Aware of this, O'Donnell felt his own condition to be almost hopeless; he therefore adopted the desperate resource of a night attack, of which plan, however, O'Neill had information. The two armies, unable in the dark to distinguish friend from foe, fought furiously, but finally O'Neill was utterly routed, with the loss of nearly one thousand men, and many of his bravest chiefs; whilst immense booty rewarded the valour of the men of Tirconnell. This was a very celebrated battle of the age, and the most sanguinary ever fought between the Cenil-Connell and the Cenil-Owen.

The victorious chief next took his way through the pass of Barnesmore, across the rivers Erne, Bundrowse, and Bunduff, encamping at Carrownamaddo,<sup>1</sup> about two miles east of Grange. Burke, and the leaders of the army at the time beleaguering Sligo, were so panic-stricken at the approach of the victor of Knockavoe, that they despatched messengers to sue for peace, but without waiting for their return, broke up the encampment, and retreated to the passes of the Curlews. Great surprise is expressed by the annalists, that a numerous, well-appointed army, of which both leaders and soldiers were animated with bitter enmity against O'Donnell, should have thus retreated before him without striking a blow; but the rumour of his great northern victory had created a panic; the leaders could not induce their men to offer resistance, and the patriot army fled precipitately to their woods and fastnesses, whilst O'Donnell

<sup>1</sup> *Ceathramha-na-madadh* (the quarter land of the dogs), a townland in the parish of Ahamlish, in Northern Carbury, near Ben-Bulbin, now Carrownamaddo.

gained even greater fame by the flight of Burke's confederates, than by his Ulster victory.<sup>1</sup>

In 1526, another coalition against O'Donnell was formed by the chiefs of Sligo; their principal leaders were—Brian O'Connor of Grange, Teige O'Connor, and the MacDonoughs of Glan and Collooney. These allies committed great depredations in Carbury, the territory of Felim O'Connor, who remained true to O'Donnell, and they drove their booty for safety into the territory of MacDermot.

O'Donnell, on hearing of these disturbances, marched into Carbury, captured from Brian O'Connor the castle of Grange,<sup>2</sup> which he dismantled, and before his return to Tirconnell he plundered the territory of MacDermot, as punishment for having harboured his enemies. The O'Conors and MacDonoughs quickly reassembled their forces, overran the district about Sligo, gathered in the corn and crops, and made an assault on the town and castle, in which they were repulsed, and compelled to retire, with the loss of one of their leaders, Roderick Ballach O'Hart; but they returned to the attack on the following day.

Hearing that Sligo was beleaguered, O'Donnell retraced his steps, and returned to the relief of his garrison; the besiegers did not await his arrival, but retreated to Belladrihed, where O'Donnell overtook, and put them to the rout. Brian O'Connor managed to evade pursuit by concealing himself in the dense intricate woods about Belladrihed. Great booty, horses, arms, and accoutrements fell into the hands of the Ulstermen; it was their greatest success over the Connaught forces since the battle of Keadydrinagh, adjoining the same locality, in 1495.

Towards the close of the year O'Donnell again entered Connaught, for the purpose of affording aid to Richard Burke in Tirawley. He encamped at Sligo; his foraging parties swept all crops from the district of Cuil-irra, which belonged to the sept of Brian O'Connor, and they burned and destroyed what was not required for their own use. O'Donnell then proceeded into Tirawley, and having accomplished the object of his expedition,

<sup>1</sup> On the death of Roderick Macdonough, chief of Tirerrill, a dispute arose as to the nomination of a successor, but finally Cormac MacDonough was elected.

<sup>2</sup> Grainseach.

which was to put an end to the disputes between the Burkes and the Barretts, he laid siege to the castle of Collooney, the stronghold of Cormac MacDonough, and pillaged the surrounding territory. MacDonough made submission, agreed to pay tribute, and give hostages for the fulfilment of the terms of the treaty; and following this example, Brian O'Connor also tendered allegiance. O'Donnell then returned to his principality, and the flocks and herds were driven out of the hiding-places and fastnesses amongst the mountains, where they had been placed for safety.

In the spring of 1527 O'Donnell invaded MacDermot's principality of Moylurg. Joined by the Sligo chiefs, he captured and demolished several castles in Roscommon, took the castle of Banada, in the barony of Leyny, and set fire to all the corn and buildings in that neighbourhood. Despite the destruction wrought by his levies, his adversaries were not quite subdued, for on his return through the pass of Ballaghboy, in Tirerrill, his forces suffered severely in a skirmish.

O'Donnell was determined to bring MacDermot under subjection, for in 1528 he again marched into Sligo with a large force of Scottish mercenaries, under Alexander MacDonnell. The great obstacle in his progress into Roscommon appears always to have been the pass of Ballaghboy; the Annals state that on this expedition "he cut through it." This celebrated defile was situated in a wooded country, and the foregoing expression denotes that O'Donnell, with the assistance of his troops, cut down a wide area on both sides of the road, thus rendering impossible the ambuscades which, up to that period, had so frequently proved fatal to the Tirconnellian forces. MacDermot, on perceiving the Ulstermen set to work in this systematic manner, made his submission.

Subsequently, in 1530, O'Donnell was enabled, by this clearance of the pass, to traverse its entire length without encountering any opposition; but he was at this period destined to sustain a succession of losses.

On the death of Cormac MacDonough, who was tributary to him, dissension broke out amongst the MacDonoughs. At length, Owen MacDonough established his claim, and with the sanction of O'Donnell, got possession of the castle of Collooney,



but his brother Murtoth, with the assistance of O'Dowd, captured the castle from him, and set O'Donnell at defiance.

The O'Dowds, assisted by the MacDonoughs, captured from the Burkes, then in alliance with O'Donnell, the castle of Ardnaree, on the Moy; but in 1533 the Burkes succeeded in retaking it by a night attack, and in a similar manner the Castle of Sligo was taken by Teige Oge O'Connor (or Thaddeus O'Connor, the younger), after having been in the possession of O'Donnell for seventeen years; some of the garrison had been previously suborned.

The O'Dowds were never able to recapture Ardnaree, though they long clung to the hope of regaining it. So feeble, however, did they become, in comparison of the Burkes, that their expectation of recovering this stronghold became a proverb, or byword, in the country. Thus a hope entertained by a person of obtaining something of which there was not the slightest prospect, was said to be like the hope of O'Dowd to regain Ardnaree:—

“*mar súil uí rhuibea le h-áro-na mağ.*”

O'Donnell marched against O'Hara Boy, who had refused to pay his tribute; great depredations were committed in the district between the rivers Owenmore and Coolaney. The expression *Idir-dhá-abhuinn* (between the two rivers) may, however, have been a general term applied to O'Hara Boy's territory. Before the return of the Ulstermen northwards, Niall MacSweeney, one of their captains, was killed on the bridge of Sligo; and upon the refusal of O'Connor's sons to yield the castle of *Eanach*, O'Donnell hanged Murtoth O'Connor on the lawn of the stronghold. *Eanach* was the ancient Irish name of the present demesne of Hazlewood. The castle of Annagh (*Eanach*) stood in former times at the extremity of a long tongue of land jutting eastwards into Lough Gill. In the “Annals of Lough Key,” the word translated “lawn” (*faithche*) was the term applied to the level green plot in front of ancient Irish residences, and used for many purposes—for games, for exercises of various kinds, for the reception of visitors, &c. The word is constantly employed by Irish writers, always in connection with the dun or fort of a king or chieftain.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the centre of the peninsula of Annagh now stands Hazlewood

In 1536, at the invitation of Richard Barrett, Bishop of Kil-lala, Teige Oge O'Connor, the MacDonoughs, and all the chiefs of North Connaught, marched against Richard Bourke. On rumour of their approach the inhabitants fled, driving off their flocks and herds, and, with any goods they were able to carry, took refuge in the Termon or monastery of Errew, in the barony of Tirawley, trusting to the sanctity of the place for protection. Bishop Barrett, however, paid scant respect either to the locality or the saint to whom it was dedicated. He entered the bawn, or enclosure in which the flocks and herds had been placed for security, drove them out, and distributed them amongst the invaders.

On the return of the expedition to Sligo, Teige Oge was nominated the O'Connor. He was the first called O'Connor Sligo; the previous title of the chief of the sept was *MacDonaill Mac-Muircheartaigh*.<sup>1</sup> The Annals add, that "it was for the purpose of ennobling and honouring the lords who *preceded* him that he assumed the new title." After his nomination, O'Connor made an expedition against the Costellos in Mayo. He failed in surprising their flocks and herds, but laid siege to the castle of Kilcolman, the chief stronghold of Roderick Costello, who yielded on condition that his territory should be spared from devastation; he also presented his opponent with a valuable suit of armour which had been taken from the Berminghams.

House, commanding views of one of the most lovely of Irish lakes. Southwards are three islets—Bernard, Wolf, and Willow Islands; whether these designations are altogether modern, or merely translations of Celtic names, has not been ascertained. The two following incidents occurred in 1535, and are here related, being typical of the then state of the county. Murtoagh MacDonough, and John Glas and Fergal, his two sons, were betrayed by some of their own sept into the hands of O'Hara Boy, who slew them at *Moy Imleach*, now Moyemlagh, parish of Kilcolman, barony of Coolavin; and the sept of Teige MacDonough whose territory was situated at *Cuil-Deghaidh*, in the parish of Kilross, barony of Tirerrill, slew Conor and Hugh MacDonough, the chiefs of a neighbouring sept.

<sup>1</sup> This appellation, or title, was derived from the chief bearing that name, Lord of Sligo and Carbury, who died in 1395. See other notices of the chiefs of the sept in the years 1413, 1420, 1431, 1462, 1471, 1488, 1494, 1495.

O'Connor then carried off Costello to Sligo as hostage, till payment of his ransom and fulfilment of the conditions of surrender.

Shortly after this occurrence, O'Connor induced the chiefs of North Connaught to form a league, with the object of refusing to pay tribute; and he mustered his forces at Sligo, preparatory to marching against O'Donnell, who, joined by Maguire, the O'Neills, the O'Reillys, and his faithful chiefs the MacSweeneys and O'Boyles, forestalled O'Connor's intentions.

O'Donnell's first day's march was short. He left Ballyshannon in the afternoon, and halted between the rivers Bunduff and Bundrowse. The movements of this campaign in the county of Sligo are replete with interest in many respects; localities can thereby be identified, and many curious incidents rescued from oblivion.

O'Donnell's encampment having been made secure, scouts were sent out, and advance parties dispatched to watch the pass between their post and the plains of "the Moy,"<sup>1</sup> as a rumour had got afloat that O'Connor contemplated a night attack. On this occasion a tragic episode occurred, which illustrates the want of discipline or method in these tumultuary levies. One of O'Donnell's chiefs, named Niall O'Boyle, was ordered by him to seize the pass, and thus prevent the possibility of a nocturnal attack by the men of Carbury. O'Boyle, burning with zeal, set out on his errand. On reaching his destination, he found the pass in possession of a force, which he charged with great bravery and dash; but his party was quickly surrounded, and himself slain, not, however, till several of his adversaries had gone down before him. The excitement of the conflict and the darkness of the evening rendering recognition difficult, it was not discovered till too late that the opposing party belonged to Hugh Boy, son of O'Donnell, who, desirous of distinguishing himself, and without orders, had set out from the camp for a similar purpose.

The death of O'Boyle was a source of great grief to O'Donnell; it did not, however, prevent his expedition. On the contrary, it seemed to spur him on to greater exertions; and

<sup>1</sup> *Magh-g-Ceidne.*



accordingly the next day he proceeded to *Findir*, the present townland of Finned, situated on the peninsula between the bay of Drumcliff and the inlet of the sea, near the village of Carney. A large body of the cavalry of Carbury was ordered by O'Conor to occupy the pass of Bradhullian,<sup>1</sup> which lies to the east of Finned. This pass was formerly defended by a castle, and the site is still called by the country-people *Bhaile-an-chaislean*, i.e., Castletown.<sup>2</sup>

Scarcely had the Carbury cavalry reached *Bealach-duin-iar-ainn*, when they were encountered by the Ulster horse. The

<sup>1</sup> *Braghait-Chuillighe*. On the old map of Sligo of 1609, this place is called Bradhillye, now Collinsford.

<sup>2</sup> *Ordnance Survey Notes*.—The tradition amongst the men of Grange and Magherow (who so late as 1836 spoke for the most part Irish) was, that O'Donnell, when leading his forces against O'Conor Sligo, always passed from Ballyshannon through the plain lying to the north-west of Ben-Bulbin, keeping very close to the sea, until he reached *Braghait-Chuillighe*, now Collinsford, which lies about a mile east of the village, and has given name to a townland in the parish of Drumcliff. Tradition further says, that at this ford (in Irish *Ath-a-choilin*, the ford of the holly, and yet remarkable for the growth of that evergreen) O'Conor always encountered O'Donnell and resisted his passage. There is a singular coincidence between the above tradition and the movement of O'Conor's troops in 1536. Collins, from whom the ford, according to a local tradition, took its name, lived in the time of this O'Donnell. He is said to have been a faithful retainer of O'Conor, proof against all bribes, and he is reputed to have beheaded without compunction any person he detected in an attempt to cross his ford, which formed one of the few inlets from the Magherow district to the country lying about the town of Sligo. However strange this statement may now appear, it should be borne in mind that the whole of the district in question had been continuous forest, that the destruction of forests is invariably followed by a rapid diminution of rainfall, and it is therefore quite credible that the streams and rivers were, at the time treated of, both wider and deeper than at present, thus forming a serious obstacle to an advance towards Sligo. Under certain restrictions, however, Collins was bound to permit the free passage over the ford of persons to whom his chief granted leave. Tradition says, the only instance in which he failed to exercise his headsman's calling, was in the case of an idiot named O'Boyle, from Boylagh, in Tirconnell, who, on being asked for his pass, handed out the ace of hearts, which he had received from O'Donnell when applied to for *coshing*, and Collins, perceiving the extreme simplicity of the man, allowed him to cross the ford.

action was indecisive; both parties retired from the scene of conflict,<sup>1</sup> the men of Carbury to Sligo, the Ulstermen to their camp; but the former had to mourn the loss of O'Hart, one of their best chiefs.

O'Donnell remained in his camp at Finned that night, and on the following morning marched to *Fearsat-reanna-an-Liagain* (the ford of the promontory of the pillar-stone), for the purpose of crossing into Cuil-irra. It was full tide at the time, and he found O'Connor's troops prepared to dispute his passage. O'Donnell, in order to sweep the ford, brought into position the siege gun given to him by the French knight in 1516. Per-

<sup>1</sup> *Duin-iarainn*, i.e., the iron fort (the prefix *bealach* is no longer used), it is now anglicised Doonierin, the name of a fort and townland in the district of the Rosses. It is in a direct line between the town of Sligo and the fearsat, or ford, on the Drumcliff river, where it joins the sea, near the village. The old road from Sligo to Drumcliff ran under the fort; and the pass down to the strand, where the lane dips into a hollow, was the ancient *bealach* or pass of Doonierin. The neighbouring townland is called Kintogher (the Cinatoher of Strafford's survey), from *cean*, the head, and *tochar*, the causeway; the name thus appropriately describes its position with regard to the *fearsat*, or *tochar*, of Drumcliff strand. Tochars varied in construction; across bogs and swampy ground they were usually composed of bushes and branches of trees, but in such a position as Drumcliff strand they were faced seawards with large stones, whereon sand washed in by the tide accumulated. Curragh Kintogher, to the south-east end of Drumcliff strand, very often covered at high water, still retains the prefix *curragh*, a term generally applied to soft ground of similar character in inland situations. In Sligo, the word *cuppač* signifies a soft boggy place, a marsh; in some parts of Ireland, it means a shrubby moor, curragh being a common name with other terminations, such as Curraghmore, Curraghbeg, &c. Curraghs produce coarse grass and rushes, and are seldom exposed to the influx of the tide; in this latter case they are designated by the word *bruch*, or *bree*, applied in Sligo to a flat or bottom lying along a strand covered by the sea at high-water; the flat being always exposed to the influx of the tide, produces nothing save a fine close vegetation. An objection may be made to this definition of the word, for there are *brees* which are inland, and not near the sea-shore; but similarly it may be observed that there are many *Rosses* met with throughout Ireland, some on the sea-shore and some inland. O'Donovan was of opinion that the above meaning of the word *bree* had been fully and satisfactorily established in Carbury, but he doubted that it elsewhere prevailed along the western coast.—*MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

ceiving himself greatly outnumbered, O'Connor moved off before the tide fell, and O'Donnell crossed the *fearsat* unopposed.

In order to ascertain the position of the *fearsat*, it will be needful to retrace the line of O'Donnell's march.

After crossing the Bunduff and Bundrowse, O'Donnell met on his way several other rivers or streams: (i.) Grange river, (ii.) a small stream which falls into the sea at the village of Carney, (iii.) Drumcliff river, (iv.) the river at Ballytivnan, and (v.) between Doonierin and Cuil-irra, the Sligo river.

By referring to the enumeration of places passed by O'Donnell on his march to Cuil-irra, and by attending to their names and situations, it may be decided (i.) that *Fearsat-reanna-an-Liagain* must have been on the river which Lough Gill sends forth through the town of Sligo to the sea; also (ii.) that the *fearsat* was situated at some distance below the castle of Sligo.

On the second day, O'Donnell's camp was pitched at Finned, near Drumcliff. The opposing parties met at Doonierin, where, after a skirmish, both sides withdrew. O'Donnell remained within his camp at Finned that night; but on the following morning proceeded to the *fearsat*, in order to force his way into Cuil-irra.

It is evident, although all trace of the name is now lost, that the *Fearsat-reanna-an-Liagain*<sup>1</sup> was on the river Gitly. The ford was certainly below the present lower weir across the river, for that weir is built on a ledge of rock, formerly considerably above high-water mark; therefore the water above it would be unaffected by the tide. Also, the ford must have been considerably below the castle (which occupied the site of the present Town Hall); for the deep inlet running up to the present work-house, when the tide was in, would effectually bar the progress of any body of troops. It did so as late as 1691, when Mitchelburne, in his advance on Sligo, had there to await the fall of the tide before crossing.

The *Fearsat-reanna-an-Liagain*<sup>2</sup> must, therefore, have been

<sup>1</sup> The Four Masters have incorporated an entirely fanciful derivation of this name in their text. They state the ford derived its name from the fall of *Liagain*, an heroic warrior of the Fomorians, who was there slain by *Lugh Lamhfada*, on his way to the battle of Moytirra.

<sup>2</sup> Joyce defines the word *Fearsat* as a term applied to a sandbank,



situated at Cartron Point, nearly opposite to the present steam-packet sheds, where, despite constant dredging, steamers have been known to take the ground at high-water, and the present depth at low-water forms no argument to the contrary, that depth being entirely artificial. O'Donovan, in 1836, states it to have been at that date quite fordable.

O'Donnell crossed the ford without opposition, and advanced into the district of Cuil-irra. O'Connor contented himself with harassing the foraging parties of his adversary; in these skirmishes neither party appears to have obtained a decided advantage; on the one side, Malachy MacDonough was killed by a shot from an arquebus; on the other, James Ballagh O'Donnell was transfixed by a lance.

After some hours of like petty warfare, O'Connor drew off his cavalry, and took up a position near Belladrihed to watch the movements of his opponent, who remained three nights encamped in the peninsula of Knocknarea, pillaging and burning all around. In those days war in Ireland was incessant, and everywhere accompanied by wholesale destruction of property; all that could not be carried off as plunder was devoted to the flames. Whether the contest was between English and Irish, or amongst the native chiefs, destruction alike marked the course of all. No doubt the forefront of the history of the kingdom is occupied by the contests of the Crown with the power of the great Irish chiefs; the background, however, is filled in by the quarrels of the various chiefs, who, ever active in internecine strife, thus effectually weakened each other.

After having completely devastated Cuil-irra, O'Donnell, trusting to superiority of numbers, ignored the presence of O'Connor at Belladrihed, and turned his position by crossing Traholly strand into Tireragh; he sent out foraging parties along the foot of the Ox mountains, where such large droves of cattle were captured, that in his camp, a "bonn," or fourpenny-piece, was the current price for two head of cattle. On learning that the

formed near the mouth of a river by the opposing currents of tide and stream, which at low water often formed a firm and comparatively safe passage across. To prevent the sand from being swept away or shifting, the ancient Irish rendered this kind of ford still more firm by the insertion of heavy stones to give permanence.

flocks and herds of the O'Dowds had been driven into Tirawley, O'Donnell crossed the Moy, seized the droves of Owen O'Dowd, and captured his wife, who was a daughter of Walter Burke.

In the meantime, MacDermot, with other allies, had joined O'Connor, who was assembling a large force to oppose the return of his foe northward; but in a single day O'Donnell passed from the borders of Tireragh to his own territory, and by this rapid movement disappointed his adversaries. They had resolved to force him to an engagement, but by the celerity of his march he avoided them, and escaped to Tirconnell, after a trifling skirmish at *Fearsat-reanna-an-Liagain*, where O'Connor's party was repulsed.

In this campaign against the chiefs of Sligo, although O'Donnell held all the open country, he was unable to capture a single castle, and he retired to his principality without exacting either homage or tribute.

At the request of his ally MacDermot, O'Connor Sligo marched into Roscommon, pillaged the districts of the Cloonties near Strokestown, and the Tuathas (the chiefs of these territories, being hostile to MacDermot), and laid siege to the castle of Turrock, in the barony of Athlone, county of Roscommon; O'Kelly, to save his lands from spoliation, surrendered, but his castle was razed. The object of the expedition thus accomplished, O'Connor returned to Sligo, bringing in his train the son of O'Kelly, and the son of O'Hanley of the Tuathas, as hostages for due fulfilment of the treaty. O'Connor also carried off, as a trophy, the "speckled" entrance gate of the castle of Turrock, and placed it in the gateway of the castle of Sligo. The description, "speckled portal door," is puzzling, the only explanation that can be offered is, that the term speckled may be equivalent to studded, *i.e.*, an iron-bound portal, with iron bosses and studs.<sup>1</sup>

In the following year (1537), Hugh O'Donnell, who had been

<sup>1</sup> In this same year Owen MacDonough, at an advanced age, became blind, and Donogh was elected chief during the life-time of the former, incapacitated by his infirmities from exercising authority; this election quite naturally produced a fight between the newly-appointed chief and his rivals, the sons of Owen MacDonough, but the dispute was soon arranged, "nothing of consequence was spoiled between them," according to the Annals.

continuously at war with O'Connor, died, and his son Manus was elected in his stead. "The Four Masters" state that O'Donnell was Lord of Lower Connaught.

In the Annals of Lough Key<sup>1</sup> a similar entry is made, but a line has been drawn through the words, as if to erase them.

O'Connor had no cause to rejoice at the death of his formidable opponent, for in September, Manus O'Donnell marched into Sligo, gathered in or destroyed the crops, overran Carbury, Tireragh, the two Leynys, Corran, and Tirerrill, captured the town of O'Hara Riavach, likewise O'Hara himself, whose life he spared, treated him with kindness, but carried him off prisoner to Tireconnell.<sup>2</sup>

In the following year (1538), O'Donnell accomplished the subjugation of O'Connor Sligo. He captured the castle of Sligo, although strongly garrisoned, and having several cannon on the walls; the O'Conors thus held it only five years after its recapture in 1533. Having garrisoned his prize, O'Donnell proceeded to Moylurg, pillaged that district, and when returning to Sligo, besieged and took the castle of Moy Gara,<sup>3</sup> on Lough Gara, in Coolavin. His son, Niall Garv, was killed by a cannon-ball discharged from the wall of the fortress; the person who fired the shot would have been killed on the spot had not O'Donnell interposed, and extended to him not only pardon, but protection, so that whoever might happen to kill, or maim him, should pay eric to O'Donnell.

From this time forward the O'Conors became feudatory to the O'Donnells, although they made occasional spasmodic efforts to shake off the yoke. The following translation of an Irish manuscript, written on vellum, gives a curious and interesting account of the conditions on which O'Connor Sligo held the castle from

<sup>1</sup> W. M. Hennessy, from expressions used in the Annals of Lough Key, under the heading of the year 1537, has made the observation that the entry of that year must have been originally written by a person residing in the north of Carbury. From this, and the erasure of the notice of O'Donnell's supremacy, it is not improbable that some portion of the Annals of Lough Key may have been written at the Monastery of Drumcliff.

<sup>2</sup> The death of Owen O'Gara, chief of Coolavin, is entered in the Annals in this year.

<sup>3</sup> *Magh-Ui-Ghadhra.*



O'Donnell ; it illustrates the mode of military tenure under the Irish chiefs. The document is dated 1539, the year of O'Conor's final submission.<sup>1</sup>

“ These are the conditions, and the agreement on which O'Donnell gives the *Bardachd*, that is, the wardenship of Sligo, to Teige, the son of Cathal Oge O'Conor, and on which he accepted it—viz., that Teige should be a trusty and faithful officer to O'Donnell on all occasions against both the English and Irish of the country, and of distant parts, and to be counselled by him in every cause, great and small, both at home and abroad, in church and country (or lay and ecclesiastical), and particularly every time that O'Donnell demands Sligo from the son of Cathal Oge he is obliged to deliver it to him ; that every time O'Donnell proceeds into North Connaught the son of Cathal Oge is bound to deliver to him the keys of Sligo, and to give him up the town itself (or castle), for the purpose of transacting his affairs in North Connaught, every time he demands it ; that should O'Donnell be under apprehension that the English or Saxons might take Sligo, he shall receive it from the son of Cathal Oge, to demolish it (the castle), lest it should be taken possession of by the English, or by any others in opposition to O'Donnell, or the son of Cathal Oge ; that Teige is bound to go along with the officers and marshals of O'Donnell to every part of North Connaught to enforce the lordship of O'Donnell ; that every time O'Donnell sends Buannaighe (hired soldiers) into North Connaught, Teige is bound to support them, and not that alone, but to enforce their billeting (or quartering) for the soldiers in every other part of North Connaught, and that Teige shall have no other soldiers than those sent to him by O'Donnell, and such as he will permit him to retain ; that Teige is bound to send O'Donnell every provincial king who may come to Sligo, and also every chief of a town throughout Sligo to be sent to O'Donnell, and do nothing else but that to which O'Donnell himself shall consent ; that Teige shall make neither peace nor war with any person far or near, in church or country (lay or ecclesiastical), but with O'Donnell's permission, and to be at war with every person whom O'Donnell desires him to be at war

<sup>1</sup> Connellan's edition of the “ Four Masters.”

with ; that O'Donnell shall have the small tower of Sligo<sup>1</sup> to give it to whomsoever he himself may please of his own people, for the purpose of transacting in it all his private affairs in North Connaught. Teige gave the Almighty God, in his Divinity and Humanity, as an oath and security for the fulfilment of everything in this engagement, and pledged himself that God might visit his body with all evils in this world, and to have no mercy on his soul at the point of death, if he did not fulfil this matter to O'Donnell, and to his heirs after him. The security for this covenant, on the part of the Church, is the Archbishop of Tuam, who is not to allow benefit of mass, of communion, of confession, of baptism, of burial in any consecrated graveyard, or the protection (sanctuary) of Church or Monastery to be given to Teige, or any person who would join him, should he violate any part of this engagement, and the archbishop is bound, and also every ecclesiastic under his jurisdiction, to extinguish the candles of the cross (that is to pronounce excommunication) against Teige, and every one who joins him, as often as O'Donnell requires them to do so.

“The sureties in these conditions on behalf of the professional men (bards) of Ireland are Conor Roe MacWard, O'Clery, and Fergal the son of Donal Roe MacWard ; and they themselves, and the professional (bardic) men of Ireland are bound to *satirize* Teige as O'Donnell may require it.

“The witnesses to this compact are the guardian (*i.e.*, abbot) of Donegal, namely, Roderick MacCormac, and the entire of his confraternity, namely, Torlogh O'Conor, John O'Donnell, Bryan Magrath, and William O'Dwyer ; also the Archbishop of Tuam (Christopher Bodekine), the Bishop O'Gallagher (Edmond O'Gallagher, Bishop of Raphoe), the Abbot of Derry (Cuchonacht O'Firgil, or O'Freel), and the Dean of Derry.

“The year of our Lord when this Indenture was written in the Monastery of Donegal was 1539, on the 23rd day of the month of June, on the Vigil of St. John the Baptist.”

The following are the signatures of the ecclesiastics who witnessed this document, as written in Latin—“Nos Edmundus,

<sup>1</sup> This was, probably, Crean's castle, or a small tower which stood to the south of the present Hay Market.

Episcopus Rapotensis interfui tempore premissorum ; Ego Frater Rogerus MacCormac, Guardianus de Donegal, cum meo conventu fuimus testes premissorum omnium ; Ego Shane O'Donnell sum testium premissorum unus ; Ego Frater Terrentius O'Connor, testis interfui premiss ; Ego Decanus Derensis interfui tempore premiss."

The Bards signed as follows (in Irish)—"I, Conor Roe, am in these sureties ; I, O'Clery, am in these sureties ; I, Fergal MacWard, am in these sureties."

O'Donnell, in order to enforce the authority conferred by this deed, marched into Sligo, stayed there during Christmas, and having received tribute and hostages, returned to Tirconnell.

Early in the year 1540, O'Donnell advanced into Connaught, devastated and despoiled the districts of MacDermot in Roscommon, crossed the Curlew mountains with his booty, and returned to Tirconnell. He soon reassembled his forces, invaded Fermanagh, and ravaged the country until securities and hostages were given for the payment of tribute, then crossed Leitrim, encamped at the foot of the Curlew mountains, and proceeded to "cut down" the pass of Ballaghboy. The meaning of this expression must be, that O'Donnell hewed down the woods and thickets bordering this celebrated pass ; a similar term, relative to this defile, is used in the year 1528 ; the Annals add, that "they cleared every other difficult pass before them." The purpose was evidently to make a good military road into the territory of MacDermot, who, on observing these preparations, became aware that resistance was useless, and submitted to O'Donnell.

Early in the year 1542 O'Donnell proceeded into Sligo, sent a scouting party to Ballymote, and drove off the flocks and herds of MacDonough. Upon this, all the chiefs of Sligo delivered to O'Donnell tribute, MacDonough, who hoped to recover his cattle, being one of the first to pay.

In the autumn, O'Donnell once more repaired to Sligo, and called upon the chiefs to attend him, and pay tribute ; he then returned to Tirconnell, and disbanded his forces. Taking advantage of this fact, Burke of Clanrickard, after having overrun the neighbouring territory of Roscommon, invaded Sligo, and took prisoners the chiefs of Sligo who had agreed to meet him



in conference ; finally, they were all released, save O'Dowd of Tireragh, MacDonough of Corran, and some of the sub-chiefs of O'Conor Sligo, who were retained as hostages.

In this same year O'Donnell wrote a letter to "his most dread and benign sovereign lord, King Henry VIII.," in which he acknowledges him to be "under Christ supreme head of the Church of England," confesses that he has "most heinously offended," and in abject terms implores pardon. This was, shortly afterwards, followed by a curious petition, in Latin, in which O'Donnell asked to be excused from attending Parliament, but prayed that he might have a gold chain, and be created Earl of Sligo, where, for a thousand years, his ancestors had held the castle.<sup>1</sup> The intent of this is manifest ; he desired to cajole the Government into an acknowledgment that O'Conor Sligo was one of his vassals.

It is obvious that the king's policy of reconciliation had its desired effect, for, as the result of perpetual internecine strife, many of the greatest chiefs being reduced to a state of humiliating poverty, were only too eager to accept the terms offered ; their ambition suddenly ran in a new channel, and they were seized with a passion for English honours.<sup>2</sup>

In 1545 Teige Oge O'Conor Sligo was treacherously slain at *Ath-cind-locha-Teched* (a ford at the head of Lough Gara), by the followers of Cormac MacDermot, and MacDermot was himself, shortly afterwards, murdered by Owen MacDermot, in *Cartron-na-capal* (the quarter-land of the horses) ; the name is no longer preserved ; it was probably a locality in the county of Roscommon.

Like vultures hovering over their prey, the Costellos of Mayo, expecting a dispute to arise amongst the O'Conors relative to the chieftaincy, embraced the opportunity of effecting a raid into their neighbours' territory as far as Bunnanadan.<sup>3</sup> The O'Conors

<sup>1</sup> Calendar of State Papers, O'Donnell to the King. Donegal, 22nd April, 1542.

<sup>2</sup> In the year 1543, the MacSweeneys, and the sept of Cormac MacDonough, made a foray into the territory of O'Hara Boy, but were followed by O'Hara, and O'Conor Sligo, who defeated them.

<sup>3</sup> In Irish, *Bun-an-fhedain* (the mouth of the brook). The word *fhedain* (brook), enters largely into local names ; it is a diminutive of *fhhead* ; the

overtook and defeated the marauders, at a place called Roosky; Costello, his son, and numerous others, were slain. The Irish name of this locality, as given in the Annals, is *Rúscach-na-gaithe* (the rough pasture of the wind), *rúscach* being the adjective form of *riasg*, a moor, marsh, fen, or rough pasture, generally anglicised Roosky.

Shortly after the appointment of Teige O'Connor Sligo, a feud arose between him and his half-brother, O'Rorke; great devastations were committed on both sides.

In this year Sligo was afflicted by a famine, so great, that for a loaf of bread six pennies of the old money were paid, a fabulous price, if the great alteration in the standard of money be taken into account. This allusion to the old currency is interesting; the term is used in contradistinction to the new, or debased money, which, as mentioned by Cox and other writers, "the necessities of the State obliged King Henry VIII. to coin." Instead of silver, the base coin issued by Henry was made current in Ireland, in sixpences, groats, half-groats, and pennies during the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary. The unpopularity of Elizabeth in Ireland, consequent on her ecclesiastical policy, was, to a considerable extent, counteracted by the reform of the currency; Connaught was the last refuge of this debased coinage. The brass money of James II. was, therefore, no original invention on his part, but merely a more decided and flagrant violation of the laws of common honesty than that of some of his predecessors.

One of those assemblages, so celebrated in ancient times, where poets and learned men competed for prizes distributed by the convener of the meeting, was held at Christmas, 1549, by the chief of Moylurg, Roderick MacDermot, whose largesse to the poets, and men of letters, is greatly extolled by the annal-

literal meaning of both is a pipe, tube, or whistle, whence, in a secondary sense, the term came to be applied to little brooks, with channels narrow and deep, like a tube (*Joyce's Irish Names of Places*, p. 443). The propensity of the country-people to translate *fhead*, whistle, may be here illustrated by their explanation of Ballinafad, *beul-atha-na-fheada*, as the mouth of the ford of the whistle, from a supposed signal, or whistle, given at the battle of Doonaveeragh, in 1599, as O'Donnell's troops passed across the ford.—*MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*

ists. The real interest of the passage, however, consists in the enumeration given of the various septs (some of them belonging to Sligo), over whom MacDermot had established authority, also the amount of tribute which he received from each. The Mac-Reynolds of Roscommon, paid to MacDermot, as yearly tribute, 200 cows; MacDonough of Corran, 100 cows; O'Gara of Coolavin, 60 cows; various chiefs of Roscommon, 144 cows; Torlogh Carrach O'Connor, 24 cows; the sept of Teige MacDonough had to furnish 40 bonaghtmen, or military retainers, and a yearly tribute of twenty shillings. Likewise tributary to him were the MacDowalls, the MacDonoughs of *Cuil-Degha*, in the parish of Kilross, the sept of Hugh Boy MacDonough, and the sept of Maurice MacDonough. Thus, it may be seen, that the MacDonoughs, after emerging suddenly from comparative obscurity to great power in the fourteenth century, fell with as great rapidity; at this period a large proportion of the sept seems to have been under the dominion of MacDermot, and the residue under O'Connor Sligo. This decline of power may be attributed to family feuds, of which their neighbours and kinsmen took full advantage; a contest between rival claimants occurred at every vacancy in the chieftaincy; they made war by plundering and burning each other's lands; an impoverished people made impoverished chiefs.

The next reference to them in the Annals is the statement that Cathal Oge MacDonough was killed by Carbury MacDonough of Corran, on *Sith-reabhach*, or the fairy mound, now Sheerevagh, in the parish of Kilmacallan, barony of Tirerrill.

In 1551, MacDermot of Moylurg captured *Muilenn Adam* (Adam's mill), in the barony of Corran, from its proprietor, Teige Carrach MacDonough, who afterwards redeemed the place by payment of one hundred marks, an immense sum in those days, which demonstrates the importance of the place. MacDermot<sup>1</sup> himself occupied it till the money was paid. He was there seized with fever, and whilst thus incapacitated, his

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1552 the death is recorded of a chief of the MacDermots at *Tech-a-muine* (i.e., the house of the brake or thicket), on the Curlew mountains. This name would be anglicised Taghamoney, but is now apparently obsolete.



brothers, without his knowledge, laid waste and pillaged the barony of Corran.

Teige O'Connor Sligo died in 1552, and the succession of his son Donal to the chieftaincy was opposed by Roderick O'Connor. The rival claimants laid waste the country. The MacDonoughs and MacDermots split into two factions; a portion of each sept espoused the cause of Donal O'Connor, whilst others sided with Roderick, who attained the coveted position; and yet, in 1556, Donal managed to possess himself of Grange, in Carbury, and to rescue his hostages, who had been imprisoned in the castle.

In 1554, MacDermot hired a body of Scottish mercenaries to assist him against the Costellos. Dunneil and Grangebegg, in Tireragh, were taken and thoroughly pillaged. Apparently the Costellos had obtained possession of these places by previously expelling the O'Dowds, who at this period had almost completely lost their little remaining power. The body of mercenaries in question may be looked upon as an advance guard of that nation, which already for some time had been gradually passing over to Ireland. Sir William Brereton, writing about eighty years after this date, states that within the previous two years ten thousand people had passed over to Ireland from one single district in Scotland. Some of that nation must have settled permanently in Leyny, for in the townland of Clara are to be found two sub-denominations, *Clara Scotch* and *Clara Irish*. These Scottish adventurers, determined to gain a livelihood, either peaceably or by the sword, were formidable opponents in the way of commerce or hard knocks; but four years later, in 1558, they met with a severe reverse. A large body of them had been engaged fighting in the cause of various chiefs in Ulster, their swords always given to the highest bidder. Tired of their quarters, or being at the time without occupation, they left that province, and passing through Carbury and the lower part of Tirerrill, penetrated to Gallen, in Mayo. Whilst in treaty with one of the chiefs of that district for the use of their swords, they were surprised in their camp on the banks of the Moy, by Clanrickard, who, on hearing that the Scots were collected in his neighbourhood, attacked and utterly routed them. Dispersed amongst a hostile population, few were able to regain the northern province. In consequence of this defeat, the power of

the Scots in the province of Connaught was for a considerable period very much diminished.

In 1559, MacDermot marched against MacDonough of Corran, pillaged his district, and plundered Templehouse. This is the first mention made of that castle after its destruction in 1271.

MacDonough and Roderick O'Connor Sligo<sup>1</sup> were shortly after defeated in an engagement on the borders of Leitrim, and the victors plundered Ballynaglogh,<sup>2</sup> in the parish of Cloonoghil, barony of Corran. In such a state of society, it is wonderful that any objects for plunder could exist. No one could feel secure that his field of corn might not be reaped by some hostile neighbouring tribe, his house burned as soon as roofed, his young cattle driven off as soon as reared, his goods seized as spoils of war, and consumed in riotous living. The inborn tenacity with which the aboriginal Celt clings to his native soil, could alone have enabled him to withstand such trials. Close and impartial examination of the state of Connaught at this period, makes it evident that far greater destruction—destruction of the most wanton kind—was perpetrated by the Irish chiefs in their internecine feuds, than by the English in their expeditions to quell disturbances against their authority.

In 1561, MacDermot and the MacDonoughs continued at feud. MacDermot proceeded to Ballymote, and in an unsuccessful attack on the castle, Cathal and Owen MacDermot were slain before the walls, and Cathal Oge O'Connor Sligo was defeated near the town, with the loss of several chiefs, including Dualtach MacDonough. In the way of tailoring, Dualtach's father seems to have been in advance of his age, for the Annals specially narrate that he was called *Tadhg-in-triubhais* (i.e., Teige, or Thaddeus, of the Trews). With reference to these garments, John Bale, Bishop of Ossory, a contemporaneous

<sup>1</sup> There is a curious dispatch yet extant, dated 11th September of this year, from the Earl of Sussex to Elizabeth, in which (amongst other matters) he states, that up to that time no O'Connor Sligo had yet paid *bonaught*.—*Calendar State Papers*.

In 1560, Teige Boy O'Hara was killed by another chief of that name, and the Annals add: "There had never sprung in Connaught of the race of Cormac Gallen a better entertainer of man and horse than he."

<sup>2</sup> *Baile-na-g-cloch*, the townland of the stones.

writer, thus describes the Irish troops of the period: "Anon, after their harvests are ended there, the kerns and gallowglasses, and the other *breechless* soldiers, with horses and their horse-grooms, sometimes three, waiting upon one jade, enter into the village with much cruelty and fierceness."<sup>1</sup>

In this same year the Earl of Sussex, Lord Justice of Ireland, collected the forces of the Pale to devastate the territory of O'Neill. He formed an intrenched camp at Armagh, and while there detached a large party on a foraging expedition. O'Neill surprised and compelled them to retreat, leaving their booty behind. This news, being greatly exaggerated, filled the English court with dismay, and Sussex had resort to negotiation—a course by which the arrogance of the Ulster chief was inflamed. However, O'Neill shortly after accepted overtures made through his kinsman, the Earl of Kildare. Sussex next proceeded into Tirconnell, and Calvach O'Donnell, who had been previously detained prisoner by O'Neill, was placed by the Lord Justice in possession of all the fortresses in that territory. Sussex then crossed the Erne into Carbury, with the intention of visiting the castle of Sligo, which he justly considered to be of great strategic importance. O'Donnell, who accompanied him, had caused his own standard<sup>2</sup> to be conveyed secretly into the castle, where, on

<sup>1</sup> *Har. Mis*: Vol. vi., 1st ed. *Trubhais*, translated "trews," may, however, have been the "trowse," a tight-fitting "combination garment" of breeches, stockings, and sandals. It was with great reluctance that Irish chiefs ceased to wear this dress, notwithstanding the great discouragement given to its continued use. In 1586, members attending Parliament had to don English attire; admittance was refused to them if habited in Irish mantles and trews. For some interesting particulars on the subject of dress, see "Life of Sir John Perrot."

<sup>2</sup> According to Sir Bernard Burke's "General Armory," p. 747: "The origin of the arms of this historic family is of remarkable interest and of great antiquity. Connell, son of Nial 'of the Nine Hostages' (Rex. Hib., 375-402), is recorded, in two of the Lives of St. Patrick, to have been converted to Christianity by that saint, who, to reward him for his singular zeal, marked on his shield the sign of the Cross, directing him and his descendants ever afterwards to bear it as the emblem of victory. The incident is thus related in the Sept. Vita (Tripartite), cap. xcv.: 'Et mox cum baculo suo, qui baculus—Jesu dicebatur Crucis signum ejus scuto impressit, asserens neminem de stirpe ejus in bello vincendum qui signum illud in suo scuto impressum gestaret.' There can be no



the arrival of Sussex before the walls, it floated ostentatiously from the battlements. The Lord Justice enquired whose colours were thus displayed. O'Donnell carelessly replied that the ensign was his, that the town had belonged to him and his ancestors for ages; and Sussex, deceived by this ruse, thereupon delivered the keys to him. O'Conor was for the time completely outwitted.<sup>1</sup>

There were in 1562 three claimants to supremacy in Sligo: O'Rorke, O'Donnell who had been installed by Sussex, and O'Conor who did not acknowledge either of the former. Sussex must have soon discovered his mistake, or perhaps had only placed O'Donnell in Sligo as Lord Paramount, with O'Conor as vassal, for he wrote at this date to the Queen, stating that he intended to make O'Conor Sligo pay a yearly bonaught to the Crown of £360, a large sum in those days.<sup>2</sup>

To the three rivals already named, a fourth, and still more formidable claimant to the chieftaincy of Sligo, was soon added. O'Neill entered the territories of O'Rorke and O'Conor Sligo, burned the corn, despoiled the entire district, carried away 3,000 head of cattle, exacted the tribute due in old times to the chiefs of Ulster, and demanded that it should be paid yearly.<sup>3</sup>

doubt that this sign or symbol was borne by his descendants, the chiefs of Tirconnell, as their emblem, down to the introduction of heraldry as a science. When Hugh O'Donel made his submission to the English Government, in 1567, and was knighted by Sir Henry Sidney (the Lord Deputy), his arms were thus recorded: *Arms of Sir Hugh O'Donnell, Lord of Tirconnell, A.D. 1567*—*Or*, issuing from the sinister side of the shield an arm fessways vested *az.*, cuffed *ar*, holding in the hand ppr. a cross crosslet fitchée, *gu.* *Motto*—"In hoc signo vinces."

<sup>1</sup> Naisse MacFirbis, who is described in the Annals of Lough Key as "the most eminent musician that was in Erin," was in this year drowned in Lough Gill, with his wife, a daughter of MacDonough; also Athairne O'Duigenan, a historian. This Naisse MacFirbis was son of Cithruadh, who the previous year had built the castle of Laccan, in Tireragh. The death is also noticed of Teige O'Beirne, chief of his name, who died at Aghanagh (*Echanagh*), on the shores of Lough Arrow; he is warmly eulogised for his many good qualities.

<sup>2</sup> *Calendar State Papers.*

<sup>3</sup> *Clanrickard to Fitzwilliam, Dublin, October 22, 1565. Calendar State Papers.* In the previous year, Brian MacDermot surprised and killed O'Conor Roe and his followers in the monastery of Roscommon. Two

After making submission to the Crown, O'Neill had gone to Dublin, and thence to London, where he made his appearance in public with great state, everywhere attended by a body-guard of gallowglasses, battle-axe in hand, with uncovered heads and long curling hair; they were clothed in saffron-dyed shirts, with long sleeves, and had short coats and hairy mantles. Thus, surrounded by barbaric pomp, he presented himself to Elizabeth, confessed his rebellion, received a full pardon, and returned home to put forth claims in every direction, fomenting domestic feuds, and taking advantage of them to extend his own dominion. His aim was to render himself supreme in Ulster, and to revive the old kingdom of the north. He drove O'Donnell and Maguire from their territories, compelled them to take refuge in Dublin; then poured forth his hordes over Sligo, to enforce a claim of supremacy which had been in abeyance for centuries. But O'Neill's fortunes rapidly declined. In 1567 he was defeated with fearful slaughter at the battle of the pass of Lough Swilly; and having taken refuge with the Scots of Down, was by them slain, in revenge for his previous barbarities inflicted on their fellow-countrymen. After O'Neill's death, the pacification of Ulster was quickly effected.

The year 1565 is memorable in the history of the county. It was then made shire-ground; but no Justices of Assize were sent into the country, which was left dependent on the discretion of a governor, armed with all the power of the State. This was a defect of Irish Government long continued, and which Sir John Davis, the talented Attorney-General of King James I., afterwards contrasted with the improvement made in the days of his royal master, when the Judges "do now every half-year, like good planets, in their several spheres or circuits, carry the light and influence of justice round about the kingdom, whereas the

days afterwards he invaded Corran, the territory of MacDonough, who was an ally of O'Connor; he pillaged the country, burned the village of Bunnanadan, under the walls of the castle, killed several of MacDonough's retainers, and drove off 200 cows. The power of MacDermot at this time had, according to the Annals of Lough Key, greatly increased. His sept was very powerful, "owing to the quantity of their horses and armour, of their men and flocks, and the power of their friends in every place."

circuits in former times went round about the Pale, like the circuit of the Cynosure<sup>1</sup> about the Pole."

Although James I. greatly improved the legal machinery of the country, it was Queen Elizabeth who brought Connaught completely under subjection to the crown and laws of England. It was her Lord Deputy who first divided the province into shires; next proceeded to induce lords and chiefs to receive sheriffs into those shires; finally, the chiefs themselves were prevailed upon to surrender their Irish titles and their lands, receiving them back by patents from the Crown, to descend in hereditary succession according to the laws of England.

The following document demonstrates that O'Connor Sligo fulfilled the former conditions; but it was not till 1585 that the majority of the chiefs of Connaught were induced to surrender their lands and receive them again on English tenure:—

"O'Connour Sligo. Indenture 24th October, 8 Eliz., between Sir Henry Sidney, K.G., President of the Council in the Marches of Wales, and Deputy-General in Ireland, with the Council of that kingdom, of the one part, and Donald O'Connour, commonly called O'Connour Sligo, of the other part.

"(i.) O'Connour acknowledges the Queen to be his liege Lady and Queen, and to be sole and supreme in both *ecclesiastical and temporal causes*.

"(ii.) He promises not to adhere to any rebel or enemy of the Queen, but to prosecute them, and especially John (*Shane*) O'Neill.

"(iii.) Whereas the Lord Deputy, on the Queen's behalf, has entered into the castle of Sligo, and demanded a certain annual rent from O'Connour, and the Earl of Kildare has claimed the said castle and rent by right of inheritance; and whereas Lord Calough O'Donell, Captain & chief of Tirconnell, has demanded the same rent, asserting that he has been invested in it for a long time past, and that he received it from time to time until the Purification last; it is agreed that as no one heretofore

*Cynosure*.—The constellation of the Little Bear, near the North Pole, by which seamen steer; hence an object on which all regards are fastened—

"Where perhaps some beauty lies,  
The cynosure of neighbouring eyes."



demanded the said rents and services to the Queen's use, or to the use of the Earl of Kildare, O'Donnell shall have a half-year's rent from O'Connour; and in consideration of the war, and for the defence of his country (now restored from the invasions of the rebel John O'Neill) the Lord Deputy and Council have granted to O'Donnell for his greater assistance the other half-year's rent, to be paid by O'Connour at the Purification next; saving all demands and rights of the Queen, and the said Earl, after that feast. The Lord Deputy promises that he will discuss and adjudicate touching the right and titles of the Queen, the Earl, and O'Donnell before the 1st May next. The Earl and O'Donnell have promised to produce their writings and evidences, and O'Connour is contented to stand to the order and judgment of the Lord Deputy.

"(iv.) For this winter and next spring only, O'Connour shall render aid to O'Donnell against O'Neill, with his horsemen and kerne; and this not of any right, but by virtue of the mandate of the Lord Deputy for the Queen's service. Monastery of ABoyle on the Day and year aforesaid."<sup>1</sup>

On the 12th November, the Queen was informed by the Council that they had taken possession of the castles of Bundrowse and of Sligo in her Majesty's name, and had delivered them to the keeping of O'Donnell "and such as he favours." They also enclosed propositions relative to O'Conor Sligo holding his lands from the Queen, and they informed Elizabeth of the rent payable by him to O'Donnell.<sup>2</sup> O'Conor, with the view of expediting his grant from the Crown, expressed a wish to do homage to the Queen in person, and he seems to have been favourably received at Hampton Court; but O'Donovan, in his notes to the "Four Masters," asserts that O'Conor was confined in the Tower of London till he made his submission. His deed

<sup>1</sup> Carew MSS. *Contemp. cop. Latin.*

<sup>2</sup> *Calendar State Papers.* Drogheda. Lord Deputy Sidney, Earl of Kildare, Sir Nicholas Bagenall, and Francis Agarde, to the Queen. Cox states that "The Deputy received the submission of several that were weary of the tyranny of O'Neill . . . and took O'Conor Sligo's submission . . . who yielded to pay rent."

In this year Hugh Boy O'Rorke was slain at Ballintogher, in Tirerrill, by O'Donnell's followers, who wished to raise Brian-na-Murtha O'Rorke to the chieftaincy of Brefney, his mother being an O'Donnell.

of submission has been preserved amongst the State papers, and is as follows:—

“1567, *Jan.* 20. O'Connor Sligo. Indenture between Queen Elizabeth, and Sir Donald O'Conchuyr, *alias* O'Connor Sligo, of the country called Carbery in Connaught.<sup>1</sup>

“On 8th November, 9th Elizabeth, the said O'Connor Sligo came to the Queen at her Palace of Hampton Court, and there, in his Irish tongue, by an interpreter, declared to her Majesty that the chief cause of his coming was to see and speak to the illustrious and powerfull Princess, whom he recognized to be his sovereign Lady, acknowledging that both he and his ancestors had long lived in an uncivil, rude, and barbarous fashion, destitute of the true knowledge of God, and ignorant of their duty to the Imperial Crown of England. He asserted that he had continually resisted that odious traitor and rebel, Shane O'Neil. At the same time he made his humble submission to the Queen upon his knees, and now he does the same in the following manner:—

(i.) “The said Sir Donald O'Chonchuyr acknowledges the Queen to be his natural Princess and Sovereign Lady, and will persecute all her rebels.

(ii.) “He not only submits his life, lands, and goods to the Queen's mercy, but also surrenders and resigns his office of Captain of O'Connor Sligo into her hands, with all the castles, manors, &c., which he holds as O'Connor Sligo, in the countries of Charbery, Tire-Eragh Moay (*Barony of Tireragh*), Layen (*Leyney*), Cowlavin, Corren, and Tire-Irill, in Connaught, imploring the Queen's pardon and grace, and that he may be henceforth reputed as an Englishman, and praying her to grant him his said country and lands, to be held of her Majesty, and that he may be for ever exempted from subjugation, and servitude, and from all other burdens, to be exacted by O'Donnell, or any other.

(iii.) “As Sir Henry Sidney, K.G., the Queen's Deputy in Ireland, has informed her that the said O'Conchuir has constantly refused to join Shane O'Nele in his traitorous proceedings, she receives the said Sir Donald O'Connor into her grace and protection, and accepts the said surrender and resignation. Before his country and lands are granted to him, the Lord Deputy and

<sup>1</sup> *Contemp. cop. Lat.*

Council of Ireland must enquire into the state of the said O'Chonchuyr, and the other premises; and then by letters patent, they shall grant him all his lawfull possessions in tail male, at a certain rent which is not to exceed a £100 Irish, and which may be paid either in money or in kine of the same value.

(iv.) "For observance of the premises, the said Sir Donald binds himself to the Queen in £10,000. Westminster Palace, 20th Jan.; 10 Eliz."

On the 25th January, 1567, he petitioned the Privy Council to be "restored to the possession of his inheritance in Sligo and Ballymote," stating that he had been a petitioner to that effect for seven years.<sup>1</sup>

O'Connor returned to Ireland, and Elizabeth wrote to the Lord Justices, announcing that O'Connor had surrendered all his possessions, that he had been granted a patent of his inheritance under the seal of England, which, on his return, he was to take out and exemplify under the seal of Ireland, and recommending that he be reinstated in his castle of Bundrowse, then in possession of O'Donnell, that of Ballintogher, which had been seized by O'Rorke, and that of Ardnaree, held by Oliver Burk. The letter concludes by ordering that the Friary of Sligo be preserved, but the friars to be changed to secular priests.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Calendar State Papers. Donogh O'Connor Sligo to the Privy Council.

<sup>2</sup> *Calendar State Papers. The Queen to the Lord Justices, 25th Jan., 1567.* The following is the text of the document in full. "Eliz. R. ——— By the Queene. Trustie, &c. Whereas Sir Donald O'Connor Sligo, Knyght, of the partes of Conagh, cummyng with our right trustie Sir Henry Sydney, Knyght, our Deputie of that our realme, hither to our Courte, to knowledge his loyall dutie to us his soveraigne Lady, hayth very humbly and voluntarily submytted himselfe to our grace and freeлие surrendered to us all his possessions; whereupon wee have receyved hym into our protection, and have farther accorded to make unto hym and th'eyres males of his father, certayne Estates of Inheritance, as more at lardge may appeare by our letters patents, which he will shoue youe; wee have thought mete to recommend hym unto youe, as one whom wee certaynly trust will prove and continue a faythfull subject; and, therfor we will and chardge you readily to here souch complaynts as he hayth to make unto you, for the deteyning certain his castells from him, as he sayth, that is to say, the castells of Bondrowys by O'Donnell and Bayleintochair by O'Warch and Ardnariach by Olyver Burghes sons, and that you cause the s<sup>d</sup> parties to appeare and make aunser before yourselves or



O'Connor neglected to take out his patent under the great seal of Ireland, and suffered for his default, for Elizabeth, in a paper of instructions, entitled, "Orders to be observed by Sir Nicholas Malby, Knight, for the better government of the Province of Connaught,"<sup>1</sup> advises the Lord President as follows:—

"And whereas O'Connor Sligo uppon a wronge suggestion unto us, of the small Circuit, and disabilities of his Countrie, obtained of us a Warrant for a graunt to passe in Ireland for the fredom of his lands, in consideration of C<sup>li</sup> Irish per annum, to be payed by hym, which graunte he hath nether passed there, nor obsarved the condicions to be performed on his parte; we think it meete that ye treat with hym to yelde to such composicion, as the rest of the captyns of Countries within that Province have consented unto, ratibly accordinge to the quantitie of his countrie, which we thinke reasonable, as well in respect of our chardge and expences, as setling a Government ther for defence of hym, and others of his qualitie, as also that the condicions to be ob-

souch other as youe shall thinke mete, to hear the complaynts of the said O'Connor Sligo; and to give direction for restitution to the said Sir Donald O'Connor, of that which shall be found due to hym by order of justice.— And furthermore wee will, that yf there hath bene any spoyles made of any his goods during his absence, in commyng hither and retourne thither, that upon his complaynt, order be gyven for the triall thereof, and restitution to be made to hym as the case shall requyre: Lastly, wee let youe to understande that upon his humble and reasonable request, we are well contented that the house of the Fryerie of Slego, whearin, he sayth the sepulture of his Auncestors hayth bene, shalbe so preserved, as the Friars thear being converted to secular prestes, the same Howse may remayne and contynue as well for the sepulture of his posteritie, as for the mayntenance of prayer and service of God. And yf in any outhere reasonable thinge the said Sir Donald O'Connor Sligo shall for the mayntenance of hymself, his tenants and possessions in our Peax, as shall belong to a good and faythfull subject, requyre your aide, wee will and chardge you to ayde and assist hym, in our name, to the best of your power, for so wee are disposed to shewe all favor to so good a servant and subject as wee take him to be; and by the experience, wee have sene of his behavior here, wee thinke assuredly he will contynue; And where he hayth required that he myght have the true copie of this our letter, we are contented that youe shall delyver unto him a copie of thc same in souche sort as in lyke cases youe are accustomed, under our seale theare.

"Geven under our signet at our Palais of Westminster, the xxv<sup>th</sup> daie of January 1567, the tenth year of our reign.

"To our trustie, the Justices of our realm of Ireland."

<sup>1</sup> Rot. Pat., 21st Eliz., M. g. f. Roll. Office, Dublin.

sarved by hym, have not ben kepte accordinge to the worde and meaninge in our former graunte."

O'Connor's submission to English law (made not through love for the Saxon, but in order to free himself from the grasp of O'Donnell and O'Neill), was in the year 1566-7. At the date of Elizabeth's letter, 31st March, 1579, he owed Crown or Quit rent to the amount of £1,300 Irish, *i.e.*, at the rate of "C<sup>l</sup> Irish" per annum for thirteen years, which corroborates the statement of Elizabeth, that he had not "obsarved the condicions to be performed on his parte."

A letter written by O'Connor from the "Manor of Slygeagh" to Cecil, makes it evident that he had taken some steps to obtain his grant; for after informing Cecil that "the neighbouring Irish oppress his country with many hurts," he desires that the Queen's letters may be immediately written to the Lord Deputy to expedite his business, and concludes by thanking Cecil for his kindness to his brother, Owen O'Connor, then at the University of Oxford.<sup>1</sup>

This illustrates one of the politic courses adopted by the government of that day, to have all minors, brothers, or near relations of the Irish chiefs, educated in England, thus to imbibe English ideas. Thierry, in his "*Histoire de la Conquête de L'Angleterre par les Normans*," notices this.<sup>2</sup> "Quant aux Irlandais de race, l'action du gouvernement sur eux se bornait, en temps de paix, à des tentatives pour attirer en Angleterre les chefs et les princes, qui etaient en grand nombre, et pour obtenir que leur fils fussent mis sous la garde et élevés dans l'hôtel du roi." This course had some slight effect in moulding the feelings of the upper classes, but it never perceptibly affected the lower strata of society. The great want of proper education was, in that age, perceived by all far-seeing men, and Spencer was certainly right in his recommendation (unfortunately neglected), that both parish and barony schools should be opened, the first to be rudimentary in character, the latter to be grammar schools.

In 1571 Brian and Turlogh MacDermot pillaged MacDonough's territory in Corran. Sir Edward Fitton, President of

<sup>1</sup> *Latin, Calendar State Papers, 6th June, 1569.*

<sup>2</sup> Conclusion, sec. iv.

Connaught, shortly after arrived in Roscommon, and held a Court in the town for seven weeks. He was an able man, just but stern, and he soon quieted the districts over which his jurisdiction extended. During his absence in the south of the province, O'Donnell arrived in Sligo, met MacDermot at Ballysodare, formed an alliance with him, and returned to Tirconnell, leaving a party of his men behind, by whom various depredations were committed. The despoiled chiefs applied to Fitton, who immediately marched with a large force to their aid. Here occurs a blank in the Annals of Lough Key, and no mention is made of the issue of the struggle, but it is certain that Fitton soon re-established order, for, on 31st January of the following year, writing from Athlone to Burleigh,<sup>1</sup> he informs him that MacDermot had been indicted of high treason, that his territory of Moylurg lay waste, and he begs for settlers to turn "the good earth to good use."<sup>2</sup> In the month of March Fitton held a court in Galway, for all under the Queen's authority, from Limerick to Sligo.<sup>3</sup>

Edward White, clerk to the Earl of Clanrickard, writing to the Lord Deputy, says, "the detestable murder of the Godly in France (the massacre of St. Bartholomew on 24th August), was no sooner committed than it was known to all the priests and friars in Connaught . . . . Cormac, the Provincial of the Black Friars, has brought indulgences from the Pope, and published the same in Sligo."<sup>4</sup>

The Four Masters, in the year 1537 (*i.e.*, thirty-five years previously), in the reign of Henry VIII., mention the first dawn of the Reformation. An impartial observer must necessarily regard the introduction of Protestantism into Ireland as a fresh element

<sup>1</sup> William Cecil, created Baron Burleigh.

<sup>2</sup> *Calendar State Papers*.

<sup>3</sup> The death is recorded, in 1572, of Henry O'Crean (*O'Craidhen*), a wealthy merchant of Sligo. The O'Creans were at one time numerous in the neighbourhood of the town, the castle (which formerly occupied the site of the present Tallant's Hotel), called Crean's Tower, is probably the small tower mentioned in O'Donnell's grant of Sligo to O'Conor in 1539.

<sup>4</sup> *Calendar State Papers*. 7th Dec., 1572. In 1573, Fitton, writing to Burleigh on the state of Connaught, says he "can say nothing good of Sligo."



of strife, adding intensity and bitterness to all the old sources of misery.

The tenets of the Reformation were, in Ireland, ushered in with every conceivable disadvantage, being introduced by a colony of invaders, who had for centuries waged war against the habits, language, and institutions of the mass of the people. In England, the preacher of the Reformation was viewed as a patriot; inveighing alike against political and ecclesiastical tyranny, he appealed to popular discontent, to national rights; he spoke the language of the masses, espoused their cause, and became their mouth-piece; but in Ireland all these conditions were reversed. The introduction of the Reformation produced a remarkable transformation-scene in Irish history. In Ireland the Popes had always espoused the cause of the English, therefore the priesthood of the Pale were pre-eminently ultramontane; but when Henry VIII. repudiated the supremacy of the Pope, and assumed to himself spiritual jurisdiction over the Church, a striking change took place.

The Pale, or those of English extraction, espoused the Reformed Creed, and acknowledged the king as head of the Church; whilst the Pope, who, during four centuries, had anathematised the Irish, now took them specially under his guardianship.

Two curious descriptions or surveys of the county are given below, according to date. In both documents Leitrim is designated as part of Sligo. The first<sup>1</sup> is without date, but in

<sup>1</sup> It includes Connaught and Thomond, and states Connaught contains "4 Counties, Galway, Mayo, Slyggagh and Roscommon." The surveyor has made the lesser contain the greater. He gives the names of the chief towns as if they were the districts, and *vice versa*.

"The County of Sliggagh contains O'Connor's country, the two MacDonoghies, O'Dwyde, and O'Ruirke's country, with others, divided into nine Baronies named as followeth, being not as yet divided into plowlands nor the parishes known.

BARONIES—(i.) Ballinvotte, contains Tireherely and the Coren, the two MacDonoghs chiefs in the same.

(ii.) Ardrary and (iii.) Ardglas containing Tirerogh and Cuelcarney (there are 24 castles and over within these two baronies, whereof I could learn the names (of) very few).

(iv.) Dromchen, containing Carbury, Nagyny, (*Nagnata?*) Moygarree, O'Connor Sligo chief;

Hamilton's Calendar it is marked 27th March, 1574. The second survey<sup>1</sup> is much shorter, and appended to it is a very unfavourable criticism.

“A General Survey of Ireland, written by some ignorant person, nevertheless, in many things, his Report is good, but his errors in misnaming is infinite, and so are his omissions; it appears to be written *circum. anno* 1574, but y<sup>e</sup> additions may be supposed to be inserted about 1597.”

During the long period intervening between the reign of Henry II. and that of Elizabeth, Sligo to the Saxon must have remained, comparatively speaking, unknown. The documents,

- (v.) Dromahier, containing O'Ruirke's country by West of Sleven Iren and Dartrey, O'Ruirke chief;
- (vi.) Letrym, containing O'Rwyrke's country by east Slevenyren.
- (vii.) Mynes, containing one of the Moynter Aleys;
- viii.) Raney containing the other Moynter Aleys;
- (ix.) Beallasedery, containing Coullowen, Maghery-Leyne, and Kuelcuan.

ABBEYS—Slygagh (occupied by friars) Ardnary (by friars) Skryne (by friars) Ballinvote (by friars) Tetemple (by friars) Grangemore (by friars) the Black Abbey in Moyhill (by the Dominicans) the Gray Abbey in Moyhill (by the Franciscans) Dromahier (by friars) Beallesedery (by friars) Cowrte; total 11.

In the same county in the bishopric of Acad' (*Achonry*) Owen O'Harte incumbent.

<sup>1</sup> MS. *British Museum*. Sligo alone is here given.  
“Sligo y<sup>e</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> County of Conaght w<sup>ch</sup> is in y<sup>e</sup> north p<sup>ts</sup> of all y<sup>e</sup> province.  
O'Conor Slygo.

Barronyes.		Castles.	
Dromagher	}	O'Rowark's	
Le Dryne		country.	
Mines			
Kein			
Dromkleane	}	O'Conor Slygo	
Ballashannon		his country.	
Ardnery			
		Towns.	
		Slygo.	
		Moy.	

Men of Name—O'Conor Slygo, O'Don (*O'Conor*) O'Har(a), O'Ghar(a) M'Denogh.”

as given below, sent by officials for the benefit of Crown-appointed functionaries, demonstrate that point pretty clearly. It is strange to think, for how long, and up to what a late date, the West of Ireland lay outside of the political and intellectual life of England.

The cause is not far to seek as regards Sligo, which, although it formed the direct line for the Ulster chiefs on their predatory incursions into Connaught and Munster, yet lay separated from the rest of the kingdom, girt on three sides by rugged mountains, penetrated by narrow glens, the passes crowned with primeval forest; on the fourth side shut in by the sea.

To a very great extent the geological formation, as well as geographical position of the county, influenced the events of its history.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS REFORMATION. THE SPANISH ARMADA.

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“ . . . . if the lightning in its wrath  
The waving boughs with fury scathe,  
The massy trunk the ruin feels,  
And never more a leaf reveals.”

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“ Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England’s praise,  
I tell of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,  
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain  
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.”



FROM 1571 to 1577 the “Annals of Lough Key” are blank, and very little information is to be gained from the “Four Masters;” but when the curtain again rises, a view is revealed of everyone’s hand uplifted against his neighbour.<sup>1</sup>

In 1577, O’Conor Don, O’Conor Roe, and other chiefs of Roscommon, made a foray into Sligo, and drove off great booty from MacDonough of Corran. They were pursued by Cathal Oge, son of O’Conor Sligo, with a band of mercenary

<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputy of Ireland, writing on the 27th April, 1576, to the Privy Council of England, makes mention in the following terms of Sligo:—

“Out of the County of Sligo, I had nothing but letters, but those humbly written from O’Connor, affirming that he durst not come for fear of the wars happened between O’Donnell and Con his nephew, but lewd and malicious tales rather made him afraid, as I take it. He hath under his tyranny O’Dowd, two MacDonoghs, two O’Haras and O’Gara, and yet he himself tributary to O’Donnell. They be all men of great lands, and they shall not choose but yield both rent and service to the Crown. All

Scots. After passing through the defile of the Curlews and Moylurg, they were overtaken a short distance beyond Tulsk, when, although Cathal Oge's horse at first gained some slight advantage, the marauders were able to repulse their pursuers with loss, and they retired in safety with their spoils.

Sir N. Malby, Lord President of Connaught, arrived in Roscommon to arrange the feud between O'Connor Don and MacDonough. His court was attended by O'Connor Sligo, who, having met with a favourable reception, requested aid for the recovery of the castle of Bundrowse, which was still garrisoned by O'Donnell, although the Queen had ordered its restoration to O'Connor. Malby granted this petition; and whilst he was occupied in assembling a force, O'Connor hastened home to raise his own levies. Malby's first day's march was from Roscommon to *Cuil-Cesra*, situated between the town of Boyle and the Curlew mountains. The following day he traversed this range to Ballymote, and was there joined by the forces of O'Connor Sligo, MacDermot, Burke, and the other chiefs of North Connaught, with the exception of O'Rorke. The combined forces advanced through Carbury, and besieged the castle of Bundrowse, which

but O'Connor himself have offered it, and he to be discharged of O'Donnell will most willingly do it."—*Carew MSS.*

Sir Henry Sydney describes his proceedings with O'Connor and O'Donnell as follows:—"15th June, 1576.—I founde Odonnell verie humble and tractable. And whereas he, and his Auncestors, have had a rent of iii c Markes Yerelye out of *Ochonnor Sligaghs* Countrie, fabulouslye chalenged to have bene paied, ever since *St. Patrick's* Dayes, but probablye averred on both sides, it hathe bene taken for theise fower or fyve Discents by the Odonnelles (but never without Vyolence alleaged *Ochonnor*) and so I thinke *Odonnell* agreed, in the Ende, to stay Exactinge of it, untill I had sente Commissioners to examyne his Clayme, and the others Deniall; and upon their Certificatt, I to take Order and this to be done in *August* next; which Order will I hope fall out to be seche, as the Quenes Majestie shall be entituled to the Rent and Service from them bothe. *Ochonnor* compounded in *Englande* to geve an hundered Markes Yerelye, to be dischardged of *Odonnell*, and so hath his Countrey graunted hym, under the Great Seale of *England*; but, if I can clerlye dischardge hym from *Odonnell*, he shall pay better. He desiered me to constitute a Sheriff in his Countrie wishinge rather a Forriner, than any, of the Soyles Brede, which I graunted, and sent one with Commission. I have great Confidence that this *Ochonnor*, who is the same that I brought into *England*, will prove a good Subjecte."—*Letters, &c.*, Vol. i., p. 114.

capitulated after a short resistance. Malby lost eight men before the walls. The stronghold was then left in the custody of O'Connor Sligo.

O'Donnell waited till his opponents were dispersed, then entered the county, overran and devastated Carbury, Tirerrill, and Leyny, and drove off his spoils in safety to the town of Sligo, where he slew Richard MacSwine, sheriff of the county, who tried to rescue the cattle. He proceeded to besiege the castle of Bundrowse, whereupon Malby reassembled his forces at Boyle, crossed the Curlews to *Cuil Deghaidh*, in the parish of Kilross, which he took, and Ballintogher shared the same fate. He then marched against O'Donnell, who, hearing of his approach, withdrew to his own territory, whither Malby was not sufficiently strong to follow in pursuit; but his forces remained four days feasting and carousing in O'Donnell's deserted lines. Malby, on his return to Sligo, "arranged with O'Rorke," who, up to this period, had refused either to assist with troops or pay rent to the Crown.

Amongst the State Papers is a curious document, dated Sligo, 25th October, by which Brian O'Rorke, of Newtown, in the county of Sligo (*Leitrim*), Esquire, "*alias* O'Rorke, chief of his name," agrees with Sir N. Malby to pay a rent to the Queen; and there is another interesting paper, dated 10th November, entitled, "Note of Sir N. Malbie's journey into Sligo, from 15th October to 4th November," which is, unfortunately too lengthy for insertion.

On his return from Sligo (10th November), Malby, writing from Dublin to Walsingham, informs the Minister that the merchants of Sligo were very anxious to have the town surrounded with walls, that he fears O'Connor Sligo is not too well-disposed,<sup>1</sup> and that before leaving the town he had placed in it another sheriff.

This was certainly an unenviable post to occupy. The previous sheriff had been killed by O'Donnell, and the Annals of Lough Key state, that shortly afterwards Robert Savage, sub-sheriff of the county, together with six of his *posse comitatùs*,

<sup>1</sup> These doubts as to O'Connor's loyalty seem to have procured the restoration of the castle of Bundrowse to O'Donnell; but for this concession he had to pay the large sum of twelve hundred marks.



were killed by MacDonough of Corran. It was with great difficulty the Irish chiefs could be induced to permit the entrance of these officials into their territories; they viewed them in the same light in which an Indian prince regards the first appointment of a British resident at his capital; he knows that the restraints of law will be drawn gradually tighter and tighter,—that his misgovernment, caprices, and crimes will meet with a check,—and that if he rebels, or refuses consent to reforms in the State, his dynasty will end with himself.

There is a well-known anecdote of Maguire of Fermanagh, who, on being informed by the Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam that he must admit a sheriff to execute the Queen's writs, his territory having been made shire-ground, replied: "Your sheriff shall be welcome, but let me know his *eric*, that if my people should cut off his head, I may levy it upon the country." This sheriff, however, managed to escape with his life; driven into a church, with all his *posse comitatús*, and there besieged till reduced to the last extremity, he was at length relieved, and Maguire thus saved from paying the *eric*, of which he was so solicitous to ascertain the amount.

In that age churches were used as fortresses, prisons, or barracks, alike by Protestant and Roman Catholic. The perpetual whirl of strife seems to have deadened the feelings of veneration for sacred edifices, which were utilised by them according to their needs. The insecurity of life and property, and the anarchy which prevailed throughout the land, were so intolerable that, although the chiefs were antagonistic, the people themselves implored the protection of the Crown. The sheriffs, however, who were to introduce English justice and "civility" amongst the natives, were frequently most oppressive in their proceedings; they had purchased their offices, and compensated themselves for the outlay by plundering those committed to their protection. Thus, under the new order of things, the spirit of disaffection, instead of diminishing, rather gained strength; the people naturally turned for relief to their chiefs, and hatred of the English Government became more highly inflamed.

Towards the close of the year, the castle of Ballymote was taken by the English, and Hugh MacDonough, chief of Corran, and

Cormac MacDonough, were made prisoners ; shortly after, it was surprised and recaptured by Tomaltach and Duvgal MacDonough ; and during 1578 and the following year, Tirerrill and Corran were convulsed by feuds amongst members of that family. Lord Justice Drury, on the 30th March, writing from Limerick to Walsingham,<sup>1</sup> says: "The rebels like to land in Sligo, where they are assured of the assistance of John Burke and others of Connaught and Ulster." This is an allusion to the expedition of James Fitzmaurice, who, joined by some Spaniards, together with English and Irish refugees, entered the bay of Smerwick, on the coast of Kerry, at a late season of the year. The descent was made further south than Drury conjectured ; probably the Connaught and Ulster chiefs desired the scene of conflict to be as far distant from themselves as possible.

Extracts from the following State document serve to demonstrate the views of the Government in 1579, respecting the Civil Reformation in Sligo ; it is entitled, "Orders to be observed by Sir Nicholas Malby, knyght, for the better government of the Province of Connaught. At Westminster the last of March 1579 in the xxi year of our Raigne—Elizabeth R."

"4. Forther yt is to be wisshed that in every countie of Connaught where there are not alredie apt and saulfe places for the keeping of the Assises & Cessions, that the Countie at their chardges were induced by good perswacion & not by constraynte, to circuit a convanyent place apte for a towne, with a wall of lyme & stone, w<sup>ch</sup> places we are contente to incorporat with such liberties, to drawe inhabitaunts to yt, as to other Coporacions like situacion within that Realm have ben graunted ; Ffor passinge of which graunts, these shalbe sufficient warrant to the Governor for the tyme beinge ; which Our determynacion & desire to have theise places of strength builded, we will you in our name to signifie to all those under your governmente, so as every Countie performe one worke, in the same, Judging that th'aptest place be in Sligo, for the County of Sligo, at Bures (Burishool) for the County of Maio, at Roscoman, for the Countie of Roscoman, and at Ballenasloe, for the County of Galloway."

In 1581, the death of Calvach, only son of O'Connor Sligo, who was buried in the Abbey of Sligo, was bewailed in very pathetic language by his comrade and companion, Brian MacDermot, one

<sup>1</sup> *Calendar State Papers.*

of the scribes who assisted in compiling the "Annals of Lough Key." MacDermot compares himself to Oilill Olum, King of Munster, who lived in the third century, and whose grief for the loss of his sons, slain in battle, became proverbial.<sup>1</sup> Calvach, only son of Donal O'Connor Sligo, and of More, daughter of O'Rorke, was the more lamented, as his parents had no expectation of other issue; had he survived, he would have ruled from the plain of Moy Ceidne on the north to Kesh Corran, and from the river Moy to the boundary of Leitrim.<sup>2</sup>

With the usual fickleness of the times, O'Connor Sligo, and his brother Cathal Oge, seem to have changed sides, and to have been now at enmity with the English, for Malby sent a large Scottish force against them into Sligo, under command of Alexander MacDonnell. The opposing bodies met face to face at *Lough-na-fidhnach*, now Feenagh Lough, in the parish of Toomour, barony of Corran, not far from Kesh mountain. The Scots retreated<sup>3</sup> from the lake until they reached *Moin-in-daire-daraigh*, or the bog of Derrydarragh, which Hennessy identifies as Derrydarragh, now Oakfield, near Sligo. If that surmise be correct, the movements of the Scots become unaccountable. The Derrydarragh here referred to would seem to be rather some locality on the Curlew range, although the name is now obsolete, or perhaps a bog in Coolavin; for the Annals state, that on the same day, after the battle, the castle of Moy-Gara was burnt by the Scots, and O'Gara, with many of his followers,

<sup>1</sup> They were killed in the battle of *Magh-Mucraimhe*, and their death forms the subject of a very ancient poem, alleged to have been composed by the king, their father; it is contained in the "Book of Leinster."

<sup>2</sup> The following obits are recorded in the Annals of Lough Key:—Murrogh MacDonough, heir to the chieftaincy of Tirerrill, died in the castle of Collooney, and Teige Reavach O'Dowd was killed by a fall off the battlements of his fortress of Castleconor. Donal Caech, of Lethrus, died in Sligo, and was interred in the Abbey. Lethrus may be either Larras in Tireragh, or Larras, now commonly called Strandhill, in Carbury. With equal probability it may be assumed to be Leitir, in the barony of Corran, called also Leitir Mic-Philip, from the family of that name.

<sup>3</sup> Hennessy says the literal translation is "they placed a shield across the track upon them," a picturesque allusion to the custom of soldiers hanging their bucklers on their backs when in retreat.



slain. On the bog an engagement took place, which ended in the utter rout of O'Connor, whose brother was slain; also the two MacDonoughs, the two Sweenys, O'Hara Boy, and other chiefs. Hugh, son of O'Connor Don, was taken prisoner; and the Scots, finding they could get a higher ransom from O'Rorke than from Malby, handed over their captive to the former. By this means O'Rorke gained in Hugh O'Connor a faithful friend and ally.

To bring back O'Connor Sligo to his allegiance, Malby went to Sligo, and thence to Dromahair, taking with him the hostages of O'Connor and those of Lower Connaught. This journey of the governor took place about the middle of June, as shown by a document amongst the State Papers, dated *Ballyndown*, 14th June, containing an order from Sir Nicholas Malby to the sheriff of Sligo, for supply of provisions to Captain Nicholas Mordant and his forces in Sligo; the proportion of victuals to be allowed for the garrisons in the county is annexed, together with bills of Captain Mordant, George Accres, and Robert and William Fowler.

Shortly after Malby's departure, Brian O'Rorke, sheriff of the county, with his *posse comitatûs*, consisting of English and Irish soldiers, proceeded in the execution of his official duties to Leitrim, and drove off a herd of cattle. His Irish auxiliaries formed the rear-guard; they were surprised and cut off by the men of Brefney, but the sheriff held firm possession of his seizure.

Alexander MacDonnell, commander of the Scottish mercenaries, after concluding his bargain for the ransom of Hugh O'Connor, captured in the action of Derrydarragh, had remained with O'Rorke; but not finding that service profitable, again renewed his allegiance to Malby, who had in the meantime reinforced all his English garrisons in Sligo, in order to protect the country from invasion, and consequent destruction of property. His most distinguished captains were Thomas Odis, William Clifford, Morna, and Brian O'Rorke, the sheriff of Sligo. O'Connor, who had lost his brother, his constable, and many retainers, at the hands of MacDonnell and his Scots, cherished the most vindictive feelings against them; he dissembled, and met them outwardly with calm, yet secretly meditated their destruction.

The Scots, again in the pay of Malby, and not dreading any attack, were encamped at the castle of Bunnanadan. O'Connor won over the English officers, and induced them to accompany his forces in a night attack on the unsuspecting Scots, when two hundred of them were murdered in their beds; dispersed amidst a hostile population, there was small chance of escape for the remainder, and very few were enabled to regain Ulster. This corps, which consisted of six hundred men, had been well armed, so that a great number of horses and coats of mail, together with ordnance and other military appliances, were obtained by the perpetrators of the cold-blooded massacre. In the Chronicle of Lough Key, shame is expressed for O'Connor's part in the crime; the loss of his brother is the only plea offered in palliation of his conduct, and the scribe concludes thus:—

“It was on the Wednesday before Dardain-alainn (Beautiful Thursday) of Corpus Christi that Cathal Oge O'Connor fell, with those who were along with him; and between Christmas and Brigid's Festival the Scots were slain.”<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1582 there are only a few disconnected entries in the Annals. MacDonough of Corran invaded Mayo, with the object of pillaging the Costellos, and as two of the latter were killed, it is to be presumed MacDonough was successful.

O'Rorke, Sheriff of Sligo, with his English soldiers, proceeded once more into Brefney against the sept of MacTernan of Lough Roda; he seized not only their flocks and herds, but also their women.<sup>2</sup> Shortly after this, a lavish and sumptuous entertainment was given in Sligo to celebrate the marriage of Mah (*Medhbh*), daughter of Donal O'Connor Sligo, and Brian MacDermot of Moylurg.

From information in the State Papers, it appears that O'Neill sent Con O'Donnell, with 120 horsemen, 1,200 Scots, and 800 “other rascals,” into Connaught. “The Scots came boldly to the hard walls of Sligo castle, for which they paid well.” Malby

<sup>1</sup> A document amongst the State Papers, dated 24th October, 1581, shows that “composition money” was paid in this year by the inhabitants of the county of Sligo.

<sup>2</sup> In this year Cathal Duv, son of Conor O'Dowd, died, and Edmond was inaugurated O'Dowd; also died Sile, daughter of O'Donnell, and wife of Teige Oge, one of the family of O'Connor Sligo.

had "a loose band of footmen" in this garrison (the expression it is presumed means an irregular infantry corps), by these the assailants were repulsed with the loss of forty men, and one of the most renowned amongst the Scottish captains. Malby immediately re-enforced all his Sligo garrisons; and the Scots, on hearing that the levies were assembling, departed to the north, but first thoroughly plundered the country, burned the town of Sligo, as well as the adjacent villages, and in consequence of O'Connor's refusal to join them, drove off 2,000 of his cattle.

O'Connor and William Burke proceeded to Athlone to make complaint to the governor, and both seem to have received justice, for subsequently, Burke, writing to Walsingham,<sup>1</sup> states that he is at feud with his brothers, but that Sir Nicholas Malby had been very kind to him, having made him sheriff of Sligo instead of O'Rorke. Burke had previously petitioned for payment of the fees due to him by the Crown, and also for permission to leave his property to his heirs general.<sup>2</sup>

From the testimony of Sir Henry Sydney, about the middle of Elizabeth's reign, and from that of Spencer and Sir Francis Bacon towards its close, may be learned the great deficiency of the Reformed Church, in the number of religious edifices for celebration of her worship, and of ministers to celebrate it. These ministers frequently held several livings, so that even with the inclination to look after their spiritual charge, they had not the time to do so, and although sincerely desirous, were ye unable, to preach the doctrines of the Reformation so as to be "understanden of the people," the medium of a common language being wanted wherewith to appeal to the understanding, or to the feelings of the great mass of the population.

The case of Eugene O'Connor presents a good specimen of the pluralist; he was appointed to four livings, viz., Achonry, Skreen, Drumcliff, and Killinickullen. No one minister could possibly attend to a district of such extent, consequently, the few Protes-

<sup>1</sup> *Dublin, 7th April, 1585.*

<sup>2</sup> (i.) *Thomas Woodhouse to Captain Anthony Brabazon, 7th July, 1582.*

(ii.) *Sir Nicholas Malbie to the Lord Deputy, Athlone, 8th July, 1582.*

(iii.) *Lord Deputy Gray to Walsyngham, Dublin, 16th July, 1582.*

(iv.) *Sir Nicholas Malbie to the Earl of Leicester, 20th July, 1582.*

(v.) *Sir Nicholas Malbie to Walsyngham, Athlone, 3rd December, 1582.*



tants resident in these parishes must, in course of time, have been absorbed amongst the members of the general religion of the country. The appointment of this clergyman is given as being in itself an interesting document, and also as preserving from oblivion two names, *Cowlcuttw*, and *Minevoriske*, as applied to Skreen and Drumcliff respectively.

“To Eugene O’Conogher clerk (with the consent of Adam Archbishop of Dublin, and Henry Wallope, Knt, treasurer at arms, Lords Justices) was granted, on 24th August 25th Eliz: as well the deanery of the church of Achonry, now vacant, and to the king’s donation, of full right belonging, with all pre-eminences, commodities, and emoluments to same belonging, as the presentation to the spiritual rectories of the parish churches of Cowlcuttw, *alias* Scrinia, and the castle of Cornelius, *alias* Castleconogher, in Killala diocese; and the rectory of Minevoriske, *alias* between the two bridges of Dromelicawe in Elphin diocese; also to the perpetual vicarage of the parish church of St. Mansin, *alias* Killinicullen, in Elphin diocese, long since vacant by right of devolution, and to the king’s presentation of full right belonging; with mandate to admit, institute, and invest him rector and vicar of same, with all their rights and appurtenances.”

The reference to Minevoriske seems to denote that at this time the river of Drumcliff was spanned by two bridges, one, probably, occupying the site of the present structure; the other higher up the stream.<sup>1</sup>

In 1584 English influence extended, and made itself supreme throughout the length and breadth of the land; the Annals of Lough Key state, that “all Erin was occupied by the foreigners this year;” the whole island continued for some time in peace, and Perrot the Lord Deputy carried out a policy of conciliation, for which he was well adapted. Following the example of Sydney, he visited the various districts of the country, and was well received by the native chiefs. Most of the lords of the surrounding territories waited upon him at Roscommon, and made the humblest professions of loyalty, a fact to be attributed, prin-

<sup>1</sup> Cahir, one of the family of O’Conor Sligo, was treacherously slain in the year 1583, by a party of the O’Harts.

cipally, to Perrot's publication of a general amnesty, for all who would return to their allegiance.

For some breach of the law, Hugh, son of O'Connor Don, was taken prisoner, and put in confinement by Perrot, but released again, upon his friends, O'Connor Sligo, Brian, and Tomaltach Oge MacDermot, each giving a bond for one thousand pounds that he would continue in the peace, also, leaving in the castle of Roscommon, as hostage, Brian MacSweeney, constable of his troops.

Shortly afterwards Bingham entered Sligo with a large force, exacted hostages from O'Rorke, took the castle of Ballymote, and carried off Cathal Oge MacDonough as hostage. The capture of Ballymote, so greatly desired by the English, must have taken place some time between the middle of October, and December.

Barnaby Goche, writing from Dublin, on the 19th October, to Burleigh, says: "The winning of Ballymote was a thing thought impossible,"<sup>1</sup> and on the 21st December, Bingham, writing from Roscommon to Walsingham, plainly suggests the fact of its capture, for he advises the Government on no account to re-grant Ballymote castle to Sir Donald O'Connor, and in the same letter he also strongly recommends that the town of Sligo should be walled; the necessity of this measure had been forcibly put before the Privy Council by Perrot, on the 25th of the previous month.<sup>2</sup>

The names of the chiefs who, in 1584, ruled over their territories in Sligo, are here given as enumerated in the Annals; it will be found, on comparison, that they correspond with the signatures affixed to the composition entered into with Perrot in the following year, by the various heads of septs.

(i.) Donal, son of Teige, son of Cathal Oge O'Connor, chief of Lower Connaught (*i.e.*, Sligo).

(ii.) Ferdorcha, son of Maurice MacDonough, chief of Tirerrill.

(iii.) Hugh, son of Carbry MacDonough, chief of Corran.

(iv.) Cormac O'Hara, chief of Leyney Boy, or O'Hara the Yellow's Country.

(v.) Fergal Carragh O'Hara, chief of Leyney Riavach, or O'Hara the Swarthy's Country.

(vi.) Edmond O'Dowd, chief of Tireragh.

<sup>1</sup> State Paper.

<sup>2</sup> State Paper.

Sir Richard Bingham, writing to Walsingham, on 8th February, 1585, from the castle of Roscommon, prays for the wardship of the heir of Sir Nicholas Malby, who had died in the previous year, and he also sought to be made constable, or commander, both of the castle of Ballymote and the Abbey of Boyle; he renewed his application to the Privy Council on the 15th March, from Galway, praying for a lease for sixty years of the Abbey of Boyle, and the castle of Ballymote, and stated that he found the MacDermot and other adjacent proprietors very bad neighbours.<sup>1</sup> The wardship of minors in that and previous ages was a post much coveted, the emoluments of guardians being considerable.

English authority made its way but slowly in Connaught; it was late in the reign of Elizabeth before the entire province was brought under subjection to the Crown and laws of England. The change was commenced in 1575 by the then Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, when he succeeded in dividing the province into shires; it was reserved for Sir John Perrot, appointed Viceroy in 1584, to complete the work.

Harassed by perpetual aggressions of their neighbours, and also of warlike English families, the aboriginal Irish lords and chiefs gladly agreed to Perrot's proposals in the hope of a settled form of government. (i.) First, there was a treaty between the Crown and the chief, in which the latter surrendered lands and title to the Queen, receiving them back on certain conditions; this form was succeeded (ii.) by Inquisitions, to ascertain the quantity of land in each barony, and the owners thereof; (iii.) finally, the deed of composition—rendered all complete.

Perrot issued, 15th July, 1585, a commission to the Governor of Connaught, Sir Richard Bingham, and twenty other gentlemen, amongst whom was Sir Donald O'Connor Sligo, authorising them to compound between the Queen and the subject, and between the lord and the tenant, for cess, cuttings, and other uncertain exactions; also to induce the inhabitants of Connaught to agree to a composition to pay ten shillings per annum for every quarter of land containing 120 acres, graphically described as “manured, or to be manured, that bears either *horn*

<sup>1</sup> State Papers.



or *corne*," that is, which was either used as pasture-land for cattle, or tillage-ground for corn. They were also to bind themselves to supply a certain number of soldiers every "Rising out," or "Hosting," which they should attend whenever required so to do by the Governor of the province.

This commission proceeded in the usual manner, *i.e.*, inquisition by a jury, to ascertain the number of plough-lands. The jury found that the county of Sligo contained 909 quarters of land, and paid £454 10s. per annum; that the county should, when required, contribute sixty foot and twenty horse at their own charge, besides furnishing thirty foot and ten horse to the levies contributed by the English peers and bishops.

(1.) The deed by which O'Connor Sligo voluntarily renounced his Irish style and title, agreed to abolish Irish gavelkind and tanistry, and to hold his land by English tenure, is now given; also (2) that, by which all chiefs in Sligo, under his authority, agreed to follow his example. Unfortunately the documents of the great composition were not fully abstracted by Hardiman, when editing O'Flaherty's "*Iar Connaught*." He only gave a general summary, but this, although it detracts somewhat from the value of the work, is still quite sufficient for all practical purposes.

(1.) "Indenture 23 Dec., 27 Elizabeth, between Sir John Perrot, Lord Deputy General and the Council and Sir Donnell O'Connor, of Sligo, otherwise Sligaghe in Connaught.

"As Sir Donell surrendered to the Queen the captainship and government of the baronies of Carbrie, Tereraghe-Moye, Tererell Laine, Coryn and Coolavin, and all his castles and lands within the County of Sligo; and as Her Highness was pleased that, upon survey and inquisition taken of what castles e<sup>ts</sup> he had, the same should be granted back again to him, with certain reservations, conditions and covenants; inquisition and survey have been duly made, and a new grant made back to the said Sir Donell, and the heirs male of the body of his father, of all the premises, excepting only one town and castle called Ballemote, as by letters patents, dated at Westminster 20 Jan., 10 Eliz., and by an inquisition taken at Sligo before Thomas Dillon Chief Justice of Connaught, and other commissioners, whose commission is dated 12 May, 20 Eliz., and by other letters patents, under the great seal of Ireland, dated the 22<sup>nd</sup> of this month, may more particularly appear.\* Towards her Highness's charge for the defence of the said country, and to

\* See Appendix.

the intent that neither his lands, nor the lands of his gentlemen freeholders or farmers, shall be charged with any cess, outrising or other ordinary imposition, but as followeth, it is now covenanted by him, that he & the heirs of his father, and other the gentlemen freeholders within the said baronies, shall, besides, the £100 Irish rent, yield and pay as rent the payments ensuing; that is to say, every year one fair and good horse, and during the space of three years next ensuing 100 good, fat, and large beeves yearly, to be delivered at the Castle of Athlone; and also shall serve at all general hostings and risings out with 20 horsemen and 60 footmen, either shot, kerne, or galleglas, for forty days at their own costs and charges. Also to pay the yearly rent of £25 of lawful money of England. The same rent, beeves et<sup>e</sup> to stand in lieu of all cess.

“The said Sir Donell and the heirs of his father shall have the moiety and half deals of all the goods, chattels, lands, tenements, et<sup>e</sup>, of persons attainted of felony, and the whole goods & chattels of persons outlawed, goods wayved or strayed. and penalties of bloodshed, within the said baronies.

“All the freeholders and inheritors in the said baronies shall hold of the said Sir Donell et<sup>e</sup> by knight service.

“All these agreements shall be established by Act of Parliament.

“Sir Donell shall permit all persons that shall have any grant from her Majesty of any manors et<sup>e</sup> in the said country, being in her Majesty's gift, quietly to hold the same without disturbance.

“In the time of any foreign invasion, or upon any great necessity, Sir Donell and the inhabitants of the said baronies shall serve and contribute at the commandment and discretion of the Lord Deputy.\*

(2.) “THIS INDENTURE made betwixt the Right Honorable Sir John Perrott knight, Lord Deputy Generall of Ireland for and on the behaulfe of the Queene's most excellent Mat<sup>r</sup> of the one partye, and the rev<sup>d</sup> fathers in God John Bishop of Elphine—Owyn bishop of Aconry—Owine electe bishop of Killalae—Sir Donyll O'Connor of Sligo, knight—Pheolyme O'Harte of Ardtarmon otherwise called O'Hart, chief of his name—Owine Oconnor of the Grawndge, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Edmond O'Dowey of Killglasse, otherwise called O'Dowey, chief of his name—Hubbert Albenaghe of Rathly, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Breene M'Swyne of Ardneglas, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Davy Dowdy of Castle Connor, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Cormocke O'Harry of Cowlany otherwise called O'Harey buy, chief of his name—Ferrall O'Harry of Ballinefennoek otherwise called O'Harry reogh, chief of his name—Breene O'Harry of Tulwy, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Owene O'Harey of Cowlany, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Ferrdorrage M'Donoghe of Cowleae, otherwise called M'Donoughe Tyrretyll, chief of his name—Mellaghlyne M'Donogh of Ballydowne, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Melaghlyne M'Donogh of Cowlwonye, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Morryshe M'Donoghe of Clonemahyne, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Cene M'Hughe of Bryckleawe, gen<sup>t</sup>.—John Croftone of Ballymote, gen<sup>t</sup>.—George Goodman of Taghtample, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Manus Reoghe of Rathmollyne, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Manus M'Teig bwy of Lyseon-

\* *Copia vera, concordans cum originali Ex per Nath. Dillon.*

nowe, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Alexander MacSwyne of Loughnevynaghe, gen<sup>t</sup>.—Urryell Garry of Moye, otherwise called O'Garry, chiefe of his name—Rory O'Garry of Kearowercoghe, gen<sup>t</sup>.—& Manus M'Bryene Reoghe of Levally, gen<sup>t</sup>.—of the other partie.

“WYTNESSETH that wheare the whole Country or terrytory of Slego ys divided into 5 principall barronies, that is to wytte, the barronies of Carbry, Tireeragh, Maghery-layny, Tire-erryell, Corryn, and the half barony of Cowlovyne, which contain as well by auncient devysion as by late Inquisition, 909 q<sup>rs</sup> of land, each 120 acres—FIRST, in the barronie of Carbry, there is a quantity of land called Cowrine Sleight Owyne O'Connor, consisting of  $28\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>rs</sup>—Cowrine Sleight Moryertaghe backaghe O'Connor of Downaly,  $27\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>rs</sup>—Cowrine Moyglenny now in the possession of O'Donyll, 20 q<sup>rs</sup>—whereof belong to the Queen in right of the Abbey of Assharroy, 4 q<sup>rs</sup>—Cowrine Sleight Briene O'Connor of Knocknerty,  $26\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>rs</sup> and  $\frac{1}{4}$  parts—Cowrine Sleight Tirrellagh Carraghe O'Connor of Askelly, 30 q<sup>rs</sup>—whereof belong to her Mat<sup>r</sup> in right of the abbey of Sligo,  $\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>r</sup>—Carowe-Rohablern, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Ballybeolane,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>r</sup>—Bally Connor, 2 q<sup>rs</sup>—Ballekilegane,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>r</sup>—Bradkyllyne,  $\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>r</sup>—Bally M'Inyrrleyne,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  q<sup>r</sup>—Rossyveolane,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  q<sup>r</sup>—Killaspickbrony, 1 q<sup>r</sup>, said  $9\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>rs</sup> belonging to the Bishoprick of Elphin—the Benan, 4 q<sup>rs</sup>, belonging to her Majesty in right of the abby of Agrosse—Carrowe-Theffenan, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Carrowe M'Idewan, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—and 1 q<sup>r</sup> belong<sup>e</sup> to her Majesty in right of the Abbay of Kilerenaude—which in the whole of that barony cometh to 150 q<sup>rs</sup>.—In the barronie of Tyreragh there is a quantity of land called Cowryne Sleight Cosney of Ardglasse, 32 q<sup>rs</sup>—Cowrine Sleight Rorye O'Dowde of Downeall, 42 q<sup>rs</sup>—Cowrine Sleight Teige O'Dowde of Isker-Owen, 40 q<sup>rs</sup>—Cowryne Sleight Donogh O'Dowde of Castleconnor, 40 q<sup>rs</sup>—Alsoe belonging to her Majesty in Skarmore as in right of the abbey of Ardnaree, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—also adjoininge to the said abbeye,  $\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>r</sup>—Killanly,  $\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>r</sup>, belonging to the bishoprick of Killalae—Kilglasse, 1 q<sup>r</sup> belonginge to same—Altyferrenan, 1 q<sup>r</sup> belonging to her Mat<sup>r</sup> in right of the abbey of Boyle—Grandgemore, 3 q<sup>rs</sup> also belonging to her Mat<sup>r</sup> in right of said abbey—Grandgeboegg, 4 q<sup>rs</sup> also belonginge to her Mat<sup>r</sup> in right of same—Skryne, 4 q<sup>rs</sup> belonging to the bishopricke of Killalae—Dromarde,  $\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>r</sup> belong<sup>e</sup> to same—Carrow I harry 1 q<sup>r</sup> belong<sup>e</sup>, as is said, to same. The Barrige,  $\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>r</sup> belong<sup>e</sup>, as is said, to same, which in the whole within that barony cometh to  $170\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>rs</sup>.—In the barrony of Magherylayny there is a quantity of land called Eaden-Sleane, 3 q<sup>rs</sup>—Leytryne, 4 q<sup>rs</sup>—Lyssenehy 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Carrowmore, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Carrownelicke, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Sleight M'Manus,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>rs</sup>—The Loughane, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Carrowene crive, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Knocktotan, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Conggall, 2 q<sup>rs</sup>—the town of Clare, 3 q<sup>rs</sup>—Ballynecary, 4 q<sup>rs</sup>—the town of Cawlanii, 4 q<sup>rs</sup>—Rabarryne, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—The Leame, Shancoghe and Carowe ne Ganvy, 3 q<sup>rs</sup> Remore, 3 q<sup>rs</sup>—and various other lands—also Cawrine Inaspicke of Ballyary, 18 q<sup>rs</sup>—Cowryne Sleight Shane oge, 34 q<sup>rs</sup>—Cowryne Sleight Arte M'Rory of Ballyklare, 9 q<sup>rs</sup>—Sleight alty Roe of the Claddaghe, 7 q<sup>rs</sup>—Dowgher, 7 q<sup>rs</sup>—Moynecrannaghe, 2 q<sup>rs</sup>—Carrow M'Ellarone, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Clonyne Larry,  $\frac{1}{2}$  q<sup>r</sup>—in the whole barony 205 q<sup>rs</sup>.—In the barony of Tyrreryell,



there is a quantity of land called Cowryne Sleight Cormyck of Cowlwony, 26 q<sup>r</sup>—Cowryne Sleight Tomultaghe M<sup>c</sup>Bryene of Clonmahine, 10 q<sup>r</sup>, whereof belongeth to her Majesty in right of the abbey of Boyle, 3 q<sup>r</sup>—Cowryne Sleight Donyle came of Tollemoylle, and Cashell Loghe Dreggan, 22 q<sup>r</sup>—also the five townes & a half called Clanarvy, 22 q<sup>r</sup>—Cowryne Sleight Rory M<sup>c</sup>Donoghe of Cowlea, 17 q<sup>r</sup>—Cowryne Sleight Teig M<sup>c</sup>Briene of Ballyndowne, 29 q<sup>r</sup>—also Cowryne Sleight Cormock Ballagh, 11 q<sup>r</sup>, whereof 1 q<sup>r</sup> belongeth to the Queene in right of the abbey of Inchyvickerinne—also Cowryne Sleight Hughe M<sup>c</sup>Mulronye of Brickleave, 14 q<sup>r</sup>, whereof 3 q<sup>r</sup> belongeth to her Majesty in right of the abbey of Boyle—also Barreorryne, 12 q<sup>r</sup> also belongeth to her Majesty in right of the abbey of Inchyvickerinne, 3½ q<sup>r</sup>—Killrashe, 2 q<sup>r</sup>—belongeth to her Majesty in right of the abbey of Loughkee—also Dromdowan, 4 q<sup>r</sup>, belong<sup>s</sup> to the Bishoprick of Elphine—also Dromcollyn, 1 q<sup>r</sup>, belong<sup>s</sup> to same—Taunaghe, 2 q<sup>r</sup> belong<sup>s</sup> to same—Killm<sup>c</sup>callane, 4 q<sup>r</sup>, belong<sup>s</sup> to same—Rosse, 2 q<sup>r</sup>, belong<sup>s</sup> to same—Killmoydownyed, ½ q<sup>r</sup>, and Shancoghe ½ q<sup>r</sup>, belong<sup>s</sup> to her Majesty in right of the Trinity Abbey aforesaid—Kilvicken-Iram, 4 q<sup>r</sup>, belong<sup>s</sup> to Her Majesty in right of the said abbey—Ballyagheshennaghe, 4 q<sup>r</sup> belon<sup>s</sup> as is said to the Archbishoprick of Tweame, which in the whole of that barrony cometh to 205 q<sup>r</sup>. In the barrony of Corrine, there is a quantity of land called Cowryne Sleight Dermott M<sup>c</sup>Donoghe, 19 q<sup>r</sup>—Banyndedane, 13 q<sup>r</sup>, belong<sup>s</sup> to Sleight Dermot M<sup>c</sup>Donoghe aforesaid—Cowryne Sleight Caball M<sup>c</sup>Donoghe of Ballyncloghe, 10 q<sup>r</sup>—Cawryne Sleight Teige M<sup>c</sup>Donoghe of Raamollyne, 32 q<sup>r</sup>—also Ballynedowie 6 q<sup>r</sup>, belong<sup>s</sup> to said Teige M<sup>c</sup>Donoghe—Cowryne Sleight Brian Keaghe of Ballyonaghan, 4 q<sup>r</sup>—Cowryne Sleight Morish M<sup>c</sup>Donoghe of Rossrife, 16 q<sup>r</sup>—Cowryne Clayne Kowanehy, in Ballyedderawen, 4 q<sup>r</sup>—Cawryne Sleight Tourult M<sup>c</sup>Donoghe of Ballymote, 22½ q<sup>r</sup>, belonging to her Majesty as in right of the Castell of Ballymote—also Portynch, 3 q<sup>r</sup>—Ballyneleasse, 2 q<sup>r</sup>—Imlaughe Naghton, 1 q<sup>r</sup>, all which 6 q<sup>r</sup> belong to her Majesty in right of the abbey of Boyle—the Grandg, 4 q<sup>r</sup>, belong<sup>s</sup> to Her Ma<sup>y</sup> in the same right—Cowlenemannagh, 1 q<sup>r</sup> belong<sup>s</sup> to her Ma<sup>y</sup> in the same right—Dromratty, 5 q<sup>r</sup>, belong<sup>s</sup> to the bishopricke of Achonry—Imlaghfaddae, 2 q<sup>r</sup>—Kylvoryne, q<sup>r</sup>—Clonoghyll, 2 q<sup>r</sup>—Killosalwy, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Kiltoran, 1 q<sup>r</sup>—Tampall-Mannagh, 2 q<sup>r</sup>—all which belong to the said Bishoprick of Achonry,—Also there is belong<sup>s</sup> to Her Majesty in right of the abbey of Ballymote, 1½ q<sup>r</sup>—also Clonyvyhane, 1 q<sup>r</sup>, belonging to Her Ma<sup>y</sup> in the same right; which in the whole of that Barrony cometh to 158 q<sup>r</sup>.—Alsoe the halfe Barony of Cawlovyn consisting of 20 q<sup>r</sup>, all which being drawn into one totall cometh to the aforesaid number of 909 q<sup>r</sup>.

“The said lords, chieftaynes, &c., acknowledging the manifold benefits & easements they finde, do graunt to the Queen’s most excellent Majestie her heirs and successors for ever one yearly rent-charge of tenn shillings ster. out of everie quarter of land aforesaid; and covenaut to answeare and bear yearlie for ever 20 good hable horsmen & 60 footemen well armed, to all hostings roods and journies within the s<sup>d</sup> province of Connaght and Tho-

mond; & 10 good hable horsemen and 30 footemen well armed, to all generall hostings proclaymed in this realme:

“That the said Sir Donill O’Conor, in respecte of his loyaltie & faithfulnessse to the Queene, shall have by letters patents to him his heirs and assigns the castells or manors of Slego in the barony of Carbry, and Meynlaghe in the barony of Magherylene, and all the lands, appertayninge as well to the name and callinge of O’Conor Sligoe, as also which belong or appertayneth to Sleight Owine O’Conor, from whom the said Sir Donill is said to be descended, or by his owne purchase or otherwise, &c., which are accounted to be 32 q<sup>r</sup> freed; and shall also have a yearly rent charge of 13<sup>s</sup> 4<sup>d</sup> going out of every q<sup>r</sup> of the residue of the said q<sup>r</sup>, being 80 q<sup>r</sup> of the land of Sleight Muryertaghe, Sleight Briene, and Sleight Tirlaghe O’Connor, and those of Cawrine Moygany, in full recompence, &c., and that he and the heirs of his father shall hold the aforesaid Castles, &c., by the service of 2 knight’s fees, as of her Majestie’s castle of Ballymote, and he is to give one fayre chief horse yearly, to the Lord Deputy, with these words graven in gold, “*quo vici vincor*,” and he shall also have 8<sup>s</sup> out of every q<sup>r</sup> of 154 quarters in the barony of Tirreraghe; 10<sup>s</sup> out of every q<sup>r</sup> of 20 q<sup>r</sup> in the barony of Cowlovine; 6<sup>s</sup> 10<sup>d</sup> out of every q<sup>r</sup> of 156 q<sup>r</sup> in the barony of Magheryleynne; 6<sup>s</sup> 6<sup>d</sup> out of every q<sup>r</sup> of 166 q<sup>r</sup> in the barony of Tirreryelle; and 9<sup>s</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> out of every q<sup>r</sup> of 110 q<sup>r</sup> in the barony of Corren.

“That the lord Bishop of Aghconry shall have 4 q<sup>r</sup> adjoining his house or town of Skrine in the barony of Tireraghe, free; and 6 q<sup>r</sup> as a demesne to his house or towne of Achonry, in the barony of Magheryleyny, free.

“In the barrony of Corran, that Cormocke O’Hary bwy shall have 3 q<sup>r</sup> free, adjoining his castle of Cowlany:—that Ferraghe Carraghe O’Hary reoghe shall have 3 q<sup>r</sup> free as a demesne to his castle of Ballinefenocke otherwise called Ballyhary.—and that Hugh M’Donoghe, in respecte of his adge and removing from Ballimote, shall have 4 q<sup>r</sup> free, in the barrony of Corrane.

“In the barrony of Tirrerel, that Ferdorroghe M’Donoghe of Cowlea shall have 3 q<sup>r</sup> adjoining his towne of Cowlea, free.

“In the Barrony of Tirrereagh, that Edmond O’Dowd shall have 3 q<sup>r</sup> as a demaine to his castle of Kylglasse, free—and that his cousin and heir apparent, Davy of Dowda, shall have 2 q<sup>r</sup> free, adjoining his house of Castle-Connor.

“That Urrell O’Gary of Moggary shall have 3 q<sup>r</sup> free, adjoining his castle of Moygary in Cowlovine.

“That Magaghline M’Donoghe shall have 2 q<sup>r</sup> free, adjoining his castle of Cowlwony in the barony of Tirrarel.

“That John O’Creane shall have 3 q<sup>r</sup> free, adjoining his house or towne of Ballynegare in the barony of Carbry.

“And for as much as the meaner sort of freeholders of the said County of Sligo, and the tenants dwellinge upon their lands, are and shall be greatlie burdened by this composition, if the petty lords and captains next above them be permitted to take such rents and customarye duties as they pretend

to belong to the said petty captainships, for remedy whereof, it is descended and agreed that the above-named O'Harry bwy, O'Harry reoghe, M'Donoghe of Tিরerell, O'Garry, O'Dowd, and all others of that sort and calling, shall have by letters patent, not only such castells and lands as belongeth to the name and callinge of O'Harry bwy, O'Harry reoghe, M'Donoghe, O'Gary, and O'Dowd, but also all such castles and lands as they or any of them be nowe justlie seized of as their inheritance, the same to descend from ech of them to their heirs, by course and order of the lawes of England: and in respect of confirming unto them the same, that after the decease of everie of them the aforesaid rents and duties shall from thenceforth be utterlie determynd an extinguished for ever. In wittnesse whereof the aforesaid lords, chieftains and others have hereunto put their seales, and subscribed their names this 23 day of Sept., Anno Domini 1585.

“ Sir Donell O'Connor, Slegoe.—Eugenius Achaden, Eps.—Eugenius Electus Aladen.—Owin O'Connor.—O'Dowde.—Brien M'Swine.—Hubert Abanaghe.—Molaghline MacDonoghe.—Cormock O'Harrye.—Molaghlin M'Donoghe, junior.—D. Doowda.—Ferdoraghe M'Donoghe.—Ferrall O'Harry.—Morrishe M'Donoghe.—Manus M'Teige bwy.—Alexander M'Swine.—Manus Roeghe.—Urrill O'Harry.—Rory Oge.—Manus M'Briene.”

Thus Sligo, theoretically, was brought to the status of an ordinary English County. With the hope of quiet possession, perhaps also for protection against the Anglo-Irish Lords, the old leading families surrendered the exorbitant power hitherto exercised by them over their vassals. Finding, however, that disturbances were carried on much as before, that the promised protection was either neglected, or inadequately afforded, the chiefs quickly reverted to the customs nominally renounced, and easily induced their followers to be again governed according to Brehon Law.

If the future of Ireland could be judged of by appearances, the attendance in the Parliament, held in May, 1586<sup>1</sup> seemed to denote that peace would be lasting, and that the two races might finally amalgamate; but after a short and stormy session, Perrot prorogued the Parliament. To those of English birth he had

<sup>1</sup> Sir Donald O'Connor Sligo, though he attended this Parliament, was not an elected member. The knights elected to represent the county Sligo were Sir Valantyne Browne, Ja. Crofton, and Jo. Marbuy. O'Donovan remarks that the last chief of the O'Connor Sligo family was Daniel O'Connor, a Lieutenant-General in the Austrian Service. He died at Brussels on the 7th of February, 1756, and was buried in the Church



rendered himself obnoxious by his conciliatory policy towards the Irish.

Sir Richard Bingham, Lord President of Connaught, did not sympathise with the Lord Deputy in his feelings towards the natives; on the contrary, he was for "terror and sharp penalties." At one sessions, in Galway, he hanged seventy persons, some amongst them of distinction. The Lord Deputy reprimanded him for cruelty, and charged him, before the council, with goading the people into rebellion by oppression and injustice: the President of Connaught retorted, by expressing his apprehension of danger from the lenity of the Viceroy; the council adopted the latter view, which gained consideration by the news of a general rising in Connaught, the insurgents declaring themselves prepared to fight for the Pope, and the King of Spain. Ireland was now drawn into the vortex of the great religious war which raged for upwards of a century between the Protestant and Catholic nations of Europe; previous to this period religion had not much to do with Irish insurrections.

Bingham returned to Connaught, armed by the Council with authority to pursue whatever policy he deemed best suited to the circumstances. His acts soon demonstrated what policy he

of St. Gudule, where the monument erected to his memory bears the following inscription:—

D. O. M.  
HIC JACET  
ILLUSTRISSIMUS D. D. DANIEL O CONNER SLIGOE  
IN EXERCITU AUSTRIACO LOCUM TENENS GENERALIS  
ET ANTIQUISSIMÆ APUD HIBERNOS GENTIS CAPUT  
QUI MOX APUD SUOS CENTURIO, SUB JACOBO II.  
IN GALLIS SUB LUDOVICO XIV.  
DEIN SUB LEOPOLDO LOTHARINGIÆ DUCE  
AC DEMUM SUB INVICTA AUSTRIACORUM AQUILA  
ANNIS XLVIII  
STIPENDIA EMERITUS  
FIDE UBIQUE, ET VIRTUTE PATRIA  
SUO APUD OMNES DESIDERIO RELICTO  
DECESSIT PLANE UT VIXERAT  
CHRISTIANI MILITIS EXEMPLUM  
OBIIT BRUXELLIS VII FEBRUARII MDCCCLVI  
ÆTATIS XCII  
R I P

thought best ; the hostages given by the rebellious chiefs were executed, their territories plundered, and all whom Bingham encountered were put to the sword.

A large body of Scottish adventurers landed at Inishowen in Donegal, and proceeded on a plundering expedition through that county and Fermanagh ; they reached the banks of Lough Erne, crossed it, and joined the insurgents in Connaught. The combined forces, amounting to 3,000 men, instigated by the Burkes of Mayo, endeavoured to expel the English forces from the province ; they encamped between the Bunduff and Bundrowes, and proceeded to pillage Carbury.

Against these forces Bingham despatched the Earl of Clanricard, who was joined in Sligo by the sheriff of the county, George Bingham ; and his brother, the Lord President of Connaught, having arranged for the defence of Mayo, set out for Sligo ; on his way through Boyle he was further strengthened by Sir Thomas L'Estrange with the " rising out " of the county Roscommon. On the 28th of August, after having re-enforced the garrisons of Ballinafad and Collooney on the way, he reached Sligo, and there learned that some of the Scots had proceeded along Benbo mountain, near Drumlease, to Dromahair, and over the Braulieve mountain<sup>1</sup> to Kilronan, pillaging as they went ; whilst another portion still lay encamped on the Erne, where they had been joined by Sir Arthur O'Neill and Hugh Maguire.

Bingham wrote to the Lord Deputy, asking for two more " bands," or troops of horse, as he could not trust the Irish cavalry. The Scots, who had encamped on the Erne, gradually moved through Leitrim as if to pass into Mayo in that direction ; but as they always encamped in strong positions, Bingham was powerless to attack. The other party of Scots remained for a fortnight encamped at Kilronan, and Bingham was uncertain by which route they intended to proceed to Mayo ; both Collooney, and the pass over the Curlews at Ballinafad, where he then had his headquarters, being simultaneously threatened. From spies he at length ascertained that the Scots had broken up their

<sup>1</sup> Braulieve mountain in *Leitrim*, to be distinguished from the neighbouring mountain of the same name in Sligo.



camp, and were conjointly marching on Collooney. Bingham divided his troops, stationed one detachment in MacDonough's castle, near Collooney, to guard the bridge, and posted the other, which he commanded in person, at the castle of Knockmullen. Despite the storm and torrents of rain, Bingham remained on the watch to a late hour, but on being assured by O'Connor Sligo that the Scots had encamped for the night, he concluded that the enemy would not attempt an immediate attack; the inclemency of the weather, however, favoured his opponents, the clash of their weapons, and their measured tramp were drowned in the howling of the wind, and the splash of the rain. They succeeded in reaching Collooney undiscovered, their advance-guard had even crossed the bridge<sup>1</sup> before the three companies of foot and the fifty Irish horse, forming the garrison of MacDonough's castle, had taken alarm; they hastened to the bridge, and after a furious encounter, in which it was almost impossible, so great was the darkness, to distinguish friend from foe, the passage of the main body of the Scots was repelled, with the loss of from forty to fifty men precipitated from the battlements of the bridge into the swollen impetuous torrent.

Bingham, after receiving O'Connor's report that the Scots were encamped for the night, had retired to rest in the castle of Knockmullen, but aroused by intelligence of the attempt to force a passage he was soon accoutred, and hastened to the scene of action, directed thither by the flash of firearms, and the shouts of the combatants. He arrived too late, for although his detachment at Collooney held their post, cut off the advance-guard of the Scots, and repulsed the attempt to force the bridge; yet, despite the rapid rising of the water by the continuous down-pour, the main body of his opponents had succeeded in traversing the stream in safety by the ford of Knockbeg, which they found unguarded; this ford, says Sir Henry Dockwra, was unknown to the English, but had been pointed out to the Scotch by the Irish.

Upon effecting the passage of the river, the Scots entered

<sup>1</sup> The Annals of Lough Key call the bridge *Droichid-in-chillin*, the bridge of the little kill, or church, which appears to have been the name of a bridge over the river Owenmore at Collooney.



Leyny, and encamped near the abbey of Banada; Bingham moved into Tireragh, believing it to be the intention of the Scots to ravage that barony; the opposing armies were separated by the range of the Ox mountains. Bingham having matured his designs, procured guides, crossed the mountains to Ocouran, a town of Bishop O'Hart's, and there pitched his camp. He caused a rumour to be circulated, that having heard the Scots purposed to ravage Gallen (Lord Bermingham's country) and the interior, it was his intention to prevent it by moving into Roscommon; to give colour to the report, Bingham marched to the castle of Moygara, and the Scots, looking upon this movement as confirmatory of the report, grew careless in their watch.

During Monday, Bingham remained at Moygara; next day he moved to Castlemore, in the barony of Costello, and on Wednesday, having received provisions and re-enforcements, he marched to the abbey of Banada, hoping to surprise the Scots, but found his opponents had moved to Ardnaree; Edmond Costello, however, found a priest who had been prisoner with the Scots, and who offered to guide him in safety to Ardnaree by a track little frequented. About three, A.M., when the moon rose,<sup>1</sup> Bingham, under this guidance, marched to Belclare, and having enjoined his troops to observe the utmost silence, he crossed the mountains and came in sight of Ardnaree. Undiscovered, he made his dispositions for attack; the Scots were dispersed through the town, totally oblivious of their risk in a hostile country; their out-sentinels were rapidly driven in, and Bingham was on them before they could form for resistance. They fired an irregular volley, but were quickly routed and driven into the river Moy; 1,500<sup>2</sup> were either slain or drowned, eighty managed to escape by swimming the river into Tirawley; all their leaders

<sup>1</sup> "When the moon gave light, Richard Bingham (being at the Abbey of Bennada) arose, and addressing himself and compayne, marched towards Belclare, seven myles from the abbeye, in the highwaye towards the enemy. Here one of the espyalls came in, bringinge news that the Scots lay still encamped at Ardnarye, which was twelve miles from the foresaid abbeye of Bannada, and eight miles from the abbey of Belclare." —*Sir Henry Dockwra's account of services done in Connaught by Sir Henry Bingham.*

<sup>2</sup> The Four Masters place the numbers as high as 2,000.

fell, including Burke, at whose instigation they had invaded Connaught. The eighty fugitives who fled into Mayo succeeded in there joining a foraging party of 120 of their own body, who had previously crossed over into that country with some of the Burkes, but in the endeavour to pass back to Ulster many of them fell by the hands of their late allies. On Bingham's side only two men were slain whilst eagerly pressing forward, but a great number of both men and horses were severely wounded.

Owing to the fearful slaughter in this encounter, the very name of Bingham everywhere struck terror; he boasted that the goods and booty captured, defrayed the entire expense of the campaign, save a sum of from £300 to £400 which he himself advanced to the State.<sup>1</sup>

Bingham, after this, held another session in Galway, when many were executed; amongst those who suffered was Brian, son of Cian O'Hara; the Annals of Lough Key state that he "was greatly lamented for his nobility."<sup>2</sup>

In the year 1586 an Inquisition was taken as to the possessions of the House of Canons Regular, at Inchmacnerin, on Church Island, Lough Key, where part of the above-mentioned Annals were compiled; it was found to have appertaining to it, besides numerous possessions in Roscommon, the following property in Sligo:—"The townland of Kilkerre, being four quarters of land with their tithes, in the Barony of Tyrerill, valued, besides reprises, at 20s.; the moiety of a quarter of land in Drumdonay, with the tithes, of the same value, besides reprises, 2s. 6d.; the rectory of Aghanagh, viz., two parts of the tithes, alterages, &c., value 13s. 4d.; the rectory of Killmacallan, value

<sup>1</sup> (i.) "A letter from a gentleman to his friend, of certain services done by Sir Richard Bingham upon the rebels and Scots in Connaught, Sept., 1586." By internal evidence it would seem to have been written later in the year. The names of the captains and the number of the English employed in the service are specified. (ii.) Annals of the Four Masters. (iii.) Lough Key. (iv.) Cox. (v.) Sir Henry Dockwra's account, and other sources.

<sup>2</sup> The following miscellaneous entries are noted in the same authority. The bridge of Ballysodare was finished by O'Connor Sligo. Oilellin O'Gara yielded five townlands in his territory, and the castle of *Daire-more*, now Derrymore, barony of Coolavin, to Tibbot Dillon, Chief Justice of Connaught; also the deaths of five chiefs of Sligo are noted.

13s. 4d. ; the rectory of Culea, value, besides reprises, 6s. 8d. ; the half townland of Kilmacroby, containing two quarters of land, with the tithes thereof, value 10s. ; all in the County of Sligo," together with various other parcels of land in the country of O'Connor Roe, in the County of Roscommon.<sup>1</sup>

In 1587, the first session, according to English Law, was held in Sligo, presided over by Thomas Dillon, Chief Justice, and Garrett Comberford, Attorney-General of the province. George Bingham was still High Sheriff of Sligo ; apparently, at this time High Sheriffs frequently retained office for two or three years consecutively. The assizes were well attended by the native Irish ; the principal event was the execution of Felim and Edmond O'Hart, two chiefs of Carbury.

Sir Donald O'Connor died at the close of 1587, and was buried in the abbey of Sligo. His uncle Donogh assumed the title, considering himself to be the heir by Brehon law, but Bingham would not listen to his claim, and expelled him from the county ; Donogh crossed the channel to present his claims to Elizabeth in person, and the commission sent into the county after the death of O'Connor, to "enquire his heir" against the title of the Crown, found in favour of Donogh MacCale Oge O'Connor, nephew of the deceased.

Bingham, writing on this subject to the Earl of Leicester, states :—"The heir is base-born and illegitimate, and the land, especially Sligo itself, by descent and lawful inheritance is now thrown into the lap of her Majesty. As the haven and castle are of so great importance, lying in the only strait through which the Scots accustom to annoy the province, I hope your Lordship therefore will not suffer it to be conveyed from her Highness. It may be, some will inform thither, I mean such as have received reward, that the taking of this from Donnoghe O'Connor may breed stirs amongst the Irishry. But the people of this province are dejected and made subject to the sword. Yet I wish the young man should have part, or all of his uncle's

<sup>2</sup> All these lands, tithes, &c., were subsequently leased, first, for twenty-one years, to William Taaffe, and on the expiration of his interest, to Martin Lisle for a like term ; but the whole interest therein for ever was, by Royal Patent of the 20th November, 1617, conveyed to John King.—*Patent Roll, James I.*



land, the castle and town of Sligo only excepted, and hold the same as a free gift in respect of his uncle's loyalty. Stand, my good Lord, when mine adversaries here shall repair thither . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Eight days after this letter to Elizabeth's favourite was written, the "Invincible Armada" sailed from the Tagus for the conquest of England. On the coast of Norway, the shores of Scotland, the Atlantic-washed coasts of Ulster and Connaught, may still be heard stories and legends of Spanish wreckage. After defeat by the English, the main body of the Spanish fleet directed its course northward; the only way open for return to the sunny land of Spain seemed to be by the stormy capes and promontories of the northern coast of Scotland.

In May the fleet left the Tagus; sunset on a September eve saw three huge galleons blundering through the race between Tory Island and the Donegal coast, units of the great Armada which had been scattered to all points of the compass.

. . . . . "the clouds  
From many a horrid rift, abortive poured  
Fierce rain with lightning mixt, water with fire  
In rain reconciled: nor slept the winds  
Within their stony caves, but rushed abroad  
From the four hinges of the world" . . .

Midnight brought the storm; furious squalls in quick succession come up from the Atlantic, a wild fierce wind sweeps over the dark sea, the great waves rise, the lightnings flash, wild kerns stand on the cliffs of the North-west coast, strain their eyes through the darkness, and by the fitful glare of the lightning flashes, catch fleeting glimpses of the tall masts of the helpless driving Spaniards. The galleons, gliding swiftly by, seem to the watchers like shadows departing from Life's shore to shape their course "into the silent land." All through the night they are driven about at the mercy of wind and waves; dawn breaks slowly and reluctantly, and discloses to view the castellated hulls of these floating fortresses strewing the beach at Streedagh. Of their crews, comparatively few succeeded in struggling safely to shore; they were gone to their rest with

<sup>1</sup> Athlone, May 21, 1588. Carew MSS.

none near to mourn over them, while the winds and the waves sang their requiem—

“ Down, down beneath the deep  
That oft to triumph bore them,  
They sleep a calm and peaceful sleep,  
The salt waves dashing o’er them.”

Even within the last few years have been exposed to view war materials, stores, cannon balls encased in lead, and likewise bones of those mariners buried nearly three centuries before upon the strand.

The largest of the galleons struck on a reef (from that circumstance called *Carrig-na-Spania*, or the Spaniards’ rock), situated off the little island of Derninsh, parish of Ahamlish; and on the map of the Sligo Coast (A.D. 1609) is placed opposite to this island the following observation: “ Three Spanish shipps here cast awaie in An<sup>o</sup> Dñi., 1588.”

All is over, the great Armada is vanquished, not by the hands of man, but of God, “ Flavit et dissipati sunt,”<sup>1</sup> the struggle which was to determine whether freedom should prevail is decided, from thence forward—

“ Britannia needs no bulwark,  
No towers along the steep.”

There was not a noble or honourable house in all the Iberian peninsula but had to mourn a son, brother, or near kinsman, who had found his grave in the English Channel, amid the bleak, rocky isles of Scotland, or on the rude shores of Connaught and Ulster. About the close of September the remnant returned to Spain in sorrow, shame, and dishonour.

On the 28th of October, 1588, Sir Geoffry Fenton, writing to Burleigh, says,<sup>2</sup> “ At my late being at Sligo, I found both by view of eye and credible report, that the number of ships and men perished on these coasts was more than was advertised thither by the Lord Deputy and Council, for I numbered in one strand, of less than five miles in length, *eleven hundred dead*

<sup>1</sup> *God blew and they were scattered.* Obv. of medal struck on the overthrow of the Armada.

<sup>2</sup> State Papers, Ireland.



*corpses* of men which the sea had driven upon the shore since the time of the advertisement. The country-people told me the like was in other places, though not of like number."

On the 31st December, the Lord Deputy, writing to the Council,<sup>1</sup> says that, "after leaving Sligo I journeyed towards Bundroys, and so to Ballyshannon, the uttermost part of Connaught that way, and riding still along the seashore, I went to see the bay where some of these ships were wrecked, and where, as I heard, not long before, lay twelve or thirteen hundred of the dead bodies. I rode along upon that strand near two miles (but left behind me a long mile or more), and then turned off from that shore; in both which places, they said that had seen it, there lay a great store of timber of wrecked ships as was in that place, which myself had viewed, being in my opinion (having small skill or judgment therein) more than would have built four of the greatest ships that I ever saw, beside mighty great boats, cables, and other cordage answerable thereto, and some such masts, for bigness and length, as in mine own, I never saw any two that could make the like."<sup>2</sup>

The first return furnished for the information of Government of the number of Spanish ships cast away on the entire littoral of Ireland, shows a total of seventeen vessels, and 5,394 men, on the coasts of Ulster and Connaught alone. It was afterwards discovered that six additional vessels had been wrecked; if the crews of these latter were in the same proportion, nearly 2,000 more Spaniards may be added to the numbers previously stated, making a total of upwards of 7,000 of the "Invincibles" either drowned, or made prisoners, and twenty-three ships lost off the coasts of Ulster and Connaught.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> State Papers, Ireland.

<sup>2</sup> See also State Papers, Ireland, Sept. 18, and Sept. 21, 1588.

<sup>3</sup> *State Papers*. The Four Masters place the loss of the Spaniards as high as 9,000 men. It appears from another document in the State Paper Office, signed by Geoffry Fenton, that he estimated the total number of ships lost by the Spaniards on this occasion to be eighteen, and the total number of men 6,194. The report runs as follows: "Shippes and men sunke, drowned, killed and taken upon this coast of Ireland, in the month of September, 1588, as followeth: In Lough Foyle in Tirconnell, one shipp, 1,100 men; in Sligo, three great shippes, 1,500 men; in Tyraughlie, one shipp, 400 men; in Clear Island, one shipp, 400 men; in Fynglesse,



Reports were current amongst the people that vast treasures and stores of various kinds brought by the Spaniards, lay secreted in the places where they had been shipwrecked, or entertained. Fitzwilliam, with the hope of getting possession of this wealth, issued a commission to search for and secure it as the property of the Crown, but the enquiry was futile; either his information proved false, or the searches were artfully evaded. Spanish ingots, as then brought from her colonies, and coins of the date of the Armada have, at various intervals of time, been found in the county; but there is no reason to believe that any large amount of Spanish gold ever found its way into Sligo; the existence of such buried treasure can only be regarded as fabulous, the mere product of popular imagination.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the Spaniards cast ashore in Ulster entered the service of O'Neill; one thousand of the same nation, under command of Don Antonio de Leva, a few of whom had escaped from the wrecks on the Sligo coast, were hospitably received by O'Rorke of Leitrim; Bingham endeavoured to compel their surrender to him, but O'Neill and O'Rorke refused compliance with his demands. O'Rorke viewed these Spaniards in the light of a powerful army, and "urged Antonio to stay in Ireland, and to declare war against Elizabeth; representing the weak state of

O'Male's country, one shipp, 400 men; in O'Flaerties country, one shipp, 200 men; in the Shannon, two shipp, 600 men; in Tralie, one shipp, 24 men; in Dingle, one shipp, 500 men; in Desmond, one shipp, 300 men; in Irris, two shipp, none lost, because the men were taken into other vessels, but the vessels and ordenance remained; in Shannan, one burnt, none lost, because the men were likewise embarked in other ships; in Gallway Haven, one shipp which escaped and left prisoners 70; drowned and sunk in the N.W. Sea of Scotland, as appeareth by the confession of the Spanish prisoners (but in truth they were lost in Ireland) one shipp called St. Mathew, 500 tonnes, men 450; one of Byshey of St. Sebastian's, 400 tonnes, men 350; total of shipp, 18; total of men, 6,194. (Signed) Geff. Fenton."

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, and "*Hibernia Anglicana*," Vol. i. p. 397. "By this shipwreck much treasure (which belonged to the Queen by her prerogative) fell into the hands of the natives. The Deputy issued out a commission to make enquiry after it; but that proving ineffectual, and he being desirous to have a finger in the pie, went personally to Ulster, in November, to the great charge of the Queen and country, but to very little purpose."

her Irish army, the vast assistance to be expected from his countrymen, and the ease with which the English power might be overthrown. The Spaniard, who possibly entertained no respectful opinion of his new ally, replied that at present he was not warranted to engage in such an enterprise without commission from his royal master; but that he should speedily return with such powers and such an armament as would effectually answer their generous purpose."<sup>1</sup> Antonio's project never reached maturity; the Spaniards embarked to return to their own country; the ship, however, foundered, and they all perished off the coast of Sligo, in full view of the harbour. O'Rorke was thus abandoned to the vengeance of the Lord Deputy.<sup>2</sup>

From the bays of Donegal, to Bantry, there was the same tale to recount, but all the natives were not so hospitable as O'Neill and O'Rourke.

- "The Irish," writes Sir George Carew, "were very doubtful before the victory was known to be her Majesty's; but when they saw the great distress and weakness that the enemy was in, they did not only put as many as they could to the sword, but were ready, with all their forces, to attend the Deputy in any service. The ancient love between Ireland and Spain is broken."

"Orders had been issued by Sir Richard Bingham, the Governor of Connaught, that all Spanish seamen driven on shore should be brought to Galway, and scouts were despatched to explore the coast-line to carry out those instructions. Day after day haggard and famished Spaniards were marched into Galway to be hanged or shot, whilst the same fate awaited their fellows in the counties of Sligo, Mayo, Clare, and Kerry."<sup>3</sup>

"Well might the Lord Deputy exclaim, 'God hath fought by shipwrecks, savages, and famine for her Majesty against the proud Spaniards!' Well might Medina Sidonia have warned his men to avoid Ireland, 'for fear of the harm that might happen unto you upon that coast.'"<sup>4</sup> We may add, in the words

<sup>1</sup> "Leland's Ireland," Vol. ii., pp. 312-3.

<sup>2</sup> The only other entry in the Annals, in 1588, is the death, in the town of Sligo, of John Burke, by the hand of William Taig.

<sup>3</sup> "Stories from the State Papers," by Alex. C. Ewald, Vol. i., p. 254.

<sup>4</sup> S.S.P., p. 256.



of brave, pious, old Sir William Monson, one of Elizabeth's most able commanders : " By this, too, we may learn how weak and feeble are the schemes of men in respect of the Creator of man ; and how impartially He dealt between the two nations, sometimes giving to the one, sometimes to the other, the advantage, yet so that He alone super-eminently ordered the battle."

Three hundred years have passed since Spanish bones lay bleaching amongst the white shells of Streedagh Strand, and since the wild waves of the western ocean shattered in pieces the towering hulls of the Spanish galleons : though often threatened, a similar attempt to subvert the liberty and religion of the Empire was never again essayed ; and let us hope, " whoever be the enemy who builds his fleet, and collects his forces for the conquest of England, he will find that history repeats itself with a terrible monotony ; for assuredly, the same punishment, varied perhaps in its details, but not the less deterrent and complete, will be dealt out to him as, in the days of Howard and of Drake, was dealt out to the Spaniard."

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<sup>1</sup> " Stories from the State Papers," Vol. i., p. 257.



## CHAPTER IX.


### ELIZABETHAN WARS.

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“ The combat deepens, on ye brave,  
Who rush to glory or the grave.”

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“ What powerful call shall bid arise  
The buried warlike, and the wise.”

N 1589 the spirit of disaffection had spread to an alarming degree in Connaught, and the entire province was convulsed. The combined hostility of the various septs caused serious anxiety to the Government, whilst it afforded to Bingham, Governor of Connaught, a pretext for measures of stern repression. This only intensified the agitation. Many questionable reports were transmitted by Bingham to the Lord Deputy of treasonable practices carried on by the chiefs of North Connaught. A patient and exhaustive contemplation of their surroundings rather exhibits them as carried along by a chain of controlling circumstances, so that the unfavourable construction placed on their conduct by the Governor of Connaught seemed to be justified by the after events, and his severity assisted in precipitating the chiefs on their ill-advised course.

To suppose that men, pretending to the authority and dignity then ostensibly claimed by the heads of septs, could at once throw off ancient manners, prejudices, obligations, privileges immemorially preserved, and all considerations by which they were bound by a thousand links of opinion and custom, to the

cause of their Irish connections, dependants, and friends, was, in point of fact, to assume the extinction of their whole nature. In any age a government, at whatever changes it aims, should proceed on the principle of toleration and caution, to avoid hurrying on consequences, more rapidly than there are means provided to secure success.

The Burkes of Tirawley renounced their allegiance to the Crown, entered Corran, carried off a great amount of booty, and were unsuccessfully pursued. The O'Rorkes plundered Corran and Tirerrill, and penetrated into Tireragh, their devastations extending as far as Easky. A force sent against the Burkes suffered defeat, with the loss of its leader; consequently the Burkes gained confidence, and formed a confederation of septs from the western extremity of Erris in Mayo, to Traholly Strand, near Ballysodare; Leyny, Corran, and the county of Roscommon, all rose in arms. Bingham's severities also drove the O'Conors of Sligo and the O'Harts of Carbury to cast in their lot with the rebels. Unsuspicious of this uprising, or confident in his own resources, William Taith (or Taig, as it is elsewhere written), with a party of twenty-five soldiers and five horsemen, proceeded to escort a convoy of provisions to Sligo from Boyle, through the pass of Ballaghboy, across the Curlews. O'Rorke, MacDermot, and MacDonough, with a body of three hundred picked men, surprised the detachment in the midst of the defile, and put all to the sword, with the exception of their commander, Taith. The convoy of provisions fell into their hands, together with three barrels of wine, intended for the delectation of the Governor of Sligo, which were thus diverted from their original destination. Bingham then despatched an English force to Sligo; this body penetrated into Tireragh as far as Kilglass and Inisheroane, and afterwards returned to the parish of Dromard (*Cuil-namh*), which they laid waste. Whilst they were engaged on this expedition, the O'Harts (*Muintir Airt*) of Carbury burned the old bawn, or fortified enclosure, of Sligo, and *Druim-na-scolb* (the ridge of the barn), now Drumaskibbole, both at the time in possession of the English.

Shortly after this, Sir William Fitzwilliam, the successor of Perrot, as Lord Deputy, made a progress to Galway. and thence to Sligo. He succeeded for a time in tranquillising the pro-

vince, but he did not pursue the upright course of his predecessor, and his avarice, corruption, and oppressive illegal exactions from the Irish chiefs, seriously damaged the Queen's government.

In 1590 O'Rorke plundered Corran, and retired with great booty; he was overtaken by George Bingham and Hugh Mus (or Mostyn), but they failed to recover the spoil of cattle.

In the month of March, Sir Richard Bingham determined to subdue O'Rorke, marched against him; his army was numerous, and he despatched the main body to *Slieve Cairpre*, in Brefney, whilst another detachment proceeded to the bridge of Sligo; in order to effect a junction, both divisions then marched into Brefney, burning and devastating all before them. O'Rorke, expelled from his territory, fled to Tirconnell, and from thence to Scotland; James (afterwards James I. of England) delivered him up to Elizabeth, and finally, he was executed at Tyburn. He met his fate with the greatest fortitude. "His indictments were, that he had stirred Alexander MacConnell and others; had scornfully dragged the Queen's picture att a horse-taile, and disgracefully cut the same in pieces; giving the Spaniards entertainment, against a proclamation; fier'd many houses, &c. This being told him by an interpreter (for he understood noe English) he said he would not submit himself to a tryall of twelve men, nor make answer except the Queen satt in person to judge him. The Lord Chief Justice made answer againe, by an interpreter, that whether he would submitt himself or not to a tryall by a jury of twelve he should be judged by law, according to the particulars alledged against him. Whereto he replied nothing, but 'if it must be soe, let it be soe.' Being condemned to die, he was shortly after carried unto Tyburne, to be executed as a traitor, whereat he seemed to be nothing moved, scorning the archbishop of Caishill (Miler Magrath) who was there to counsell him for his soul's health, because he had broken his vow, from a Franciscan turning Protestant."<sup>1</sup> Although the chiefs of the O'Rorkes, for a short period after, exercised a precarious kind of authority, none were ever able to wield such power as of old.

<sup>1</sup> MS. History of Ireland, Royal Irish Academy.



Bingham erected a strong fortress between Lough Key and Lough Arrow for the purpose of securing uninterrupted military communication between Roscommon and Leitrim.

The Burkes, returning to their own territory from a foray in Roscommon, passed through Leyny, made an unsuccessful attack on the castle of Banada, slew numbers, and left the village a heap of smoking ruins.

Felim Oge O'Connor, Felim Dartighach O'Hart, and the other hostages confined in the castle of Ballymote, tried to surprise the garrison and make themselves masters of the place; they failed in the attempt, and were all put to the sword.

In this year, died in Sligo, John O'Crean (O'Craidhen), a well-known merchant of his day; the "Annals of Lough Key" record his death in a peculiar manner, and pay him a very doubtful compliment, by stating that he was "the *least wicked* merchant that was in Erin, and *that* was a great cause of lamentation."

Sligo enjoyed repose till May, 1593, when a dispute arose between Sir George Bingham, then resident in Ballymote, and O'Rorke, relative to a portion of the Queen's rent which had not been paid. O'Rorke maintained that all rents except those on waste lands had been paid, and that the Governor had no right to demand rent for wastes. Bingham despatched troops into Brefney to seize cattle in lieu of the deficit; they drove off O'Rorke's milch cows, and he vainly demanded their restoration from Bingham. Determined on revenge, O'Rorke returned to his own territory, and sent off to Tyrone, Tirconnell, and Fermanagh for aid, and for mercenaries; upon their arrival he made a rapid march towards Ballymote, and when near his destination he sent out foraging parties, and swept the district of the two *Triochas*, or baronies of the MacDonoughs, *i.e.*, the present territories of Corran and Tirerrill. O'Rorke remained with the main body to blockade the garrison of Ballymote; there was some fighting, without decided advantage to either side; O'Rorke lost one of his chiefs, and Bingham one of his captains, Gilbert Grace.

O'Rorke pillaged and burned the town of Ballymote, and thirteen neighbouring villages, then retired with his spoils to Brefney. Maguire of Fermanagh, encouraged by the success of

O'Rorke, entered into alliance with him, and proceeded along the shores of Lough Arrow, and through the south of Tirerrill and Corran, to the bridge of Boyle, thence to the plains of Connaught, where he had a sharp conflict near Tulsk with Bingham, who, though at first successful, was outnumbered, and had to draw off with the loss of five men, amongst whom was William Clifford, described in the Annals as an "eminent gentleman;" on the other side fell the Primate MacGauran. The entire stretch of country from Clogher in Tyrone to Croghan in Roscommon, and from Ballysodare to Cavan was now in a state of commotion and anarchy.

On the escape of the young chief of Tirconnell from prison he set the English at defiance. His capture and escape seem like a romance, of which the following is but a brief outline:—

Hugh Roe O'Donnell, last chief of Tirconnell, born A.D. 1571, was eldest son of Sir Hugh O'Donnell, who had always been on the most friendly terms with the Government. There was a lively competition amongst the septs of Tirconnell for the fosterage of this child, who was finally entrusted to O'Doherty, a chief descended from the stem of O'Neill. At the early age of fifteen his accomplishments of mind and body were the theme of wonder amongst the Irish, and there was a prophetic expectation of great events to attend on his maturer years. The most unquestionable tribute to his growing reputation was the apprehension entertained of him by the English Government. His sister was wife of Tyrone, and dread was also felt of the union established by fosterage between O'Donnell and O'Doherty. On these grounds Sir John Perrot came to the resolution of securing possession of the youth, for which purpose a stratagem was devised. A ship, laden with wine, principally Sack, a beverage much relished by the Irish, arrived in Lough Swilly, and anchored opposite Rathmullen. The captain spread a report of the nature of his cargo, and the people soon flocked from every side to buy his wines. Young Hugh Roe O'Donnell was then on a visit to Dundonald, the castle of McSwiney, and a message was despatched to the ship for wine wherewith to entertain a guest of such distinction. The captain stated that there was only enough then remaining for use of the crew, there was none to dispose of; but if the gentlemen came on board he would



entertain them. O'Donnell, accompanied by other noble youths (sons of the famous Shane O'Neill), who had arrived at Dundonald as truants from the restraint of their governors and teachers, needed no better sport; taking a boat, they rowed over to the ship, with the design of making the Saxon's wine pay for his refusal to sell. A plentiful entertainment, followed by rapid circulation of the wine-cup, left the deluded guests incapable of resistance; their arms were secured, the hatches battened down, the vessel weighed anchor, sailed for Dublin, and Hugh Roe, being brought before Sir John Perrot and the Council, was by them confined in the castle of Dublin, where he remained over three years. Despite all precautions O'Donnell and his companions were able to plan an escape; by means of a rope they let themselves down from the battlements of the castle on a dark night, and secured the gate of the fortress, so that the guards could only be released from without by the citizens; the party managed to evade pursuit and gain the Dublin mountains, but Hugh Roe, after suffering great hardship, at length took refuge with O'Toole, who, sometime his fellow-prisoner, had professed great friendship for him. O'Toole, however, feared to harbour him, and gave him up to the English. A year of dreary confinement followed, attended with increased caution and suspicion, when in December, 1592, Hugh Roe resolved on another effort for liberty; it is supposed that the Lord Deputy was privy to this escape, for which he received a large bribe. It was Christmas; the keepers had indulged in the wine-cup, and the captives seized on the opportunity for escape. By means of a long rope they let themselves down into the deep ditch which fenced the fortress round. Having cleared all obstacles they threw off their soiled upper garments, and, as on the former occasion, made their way to the mountains. A violent tempest, with driving snow, although it stopped pursuit, yet chilled them through in their half-clad state, and the whole party became so exhausted that when they found, near the top of the mountain, a slight ledge of rock which broke the violence of the gale, they lay down, yielded to the influence of the cold, and gave way to sleep. O'Donnell's servant, however, struggled on to Glenmalur, the seat of a chief named O'Byrne, and gave notice of their lamentable plight; but when relief arrived, Art O'Neill was past recovery,



and although Hugh Roe gradually revived, his feet were so frost-bitten that he had to be carried to Glenmalur, where he was concealed, and his safety sedulously watched over by O'Byrne, who despatched a messenger to his guardian and kinsman, Tyrone. As soon as O'Donnell was sufficiently recovered to continue his flight, O'Byrne sent a strong guard to protect him until he should have passed the Liffey, where strong parties of English were posted at all the fords; the fugitives succeeded in crossing the river unperceived. Hugh Roe, now accompanied merely by a confidential servant of Tyrone, who knew how to choose the safest ways, travelled during the night through the county of Meath, and at day-break they were rowed across the Boyne at some distance from Drogheda by a poor fisherman, and reached the dwelling of an Englishman, a steadfast friend of Tyrone, with whom they rested for a while in strict concealment. They next crossed the mountains till they arrived at Dundalk, and at an early hour in the morning traversed the town without attracting notice; they adopted that bold course, in the belief that it was the least likely to arouse the suspicion of the English. There was an end to all risk, they now stood on the territory of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone.

A reconciliation between O'Donnell and the Lord Deputy was effected by O'Neill, who took credit to himself for converting O'Donnell to loyalty; nevertheless, Elizabeth soon ascertained that both chiefs were implicated in a conspiracy to restore the Roman Catholic Church, extirpate Protestantism, and throw off English rule. She resolved to show no mercy; but her new Lord Deputy, Sir W. Russell, who assumed office in 1594, preferred to follow out a plan of negotiation, a course looked upon simply as proof of weakness by the combined chiefs.

In 1595 O'Donnell, burning to avenge his capture and imprisonment in Dublin castle, broke into open rebellion, and carried the war into Connaught. He passed through Leitrim, and part of Tirerrill, into Roscommon, but was unable to effect much. The English had firm hold of the province, occupied all the strategic positions and castles; the native chiefs were overawed, but they looked anxiously to the conduct and character of O'Donnell as affording hope of vengeance, if not of redress. Bingham's headquarters were in Roscommon, one large detachment occupied

the monastery of Boyle, another at Tulsk ; Ballymote and Sligo<sup>1</sup> strongly garrisoned, also Newport, which is situated between Lough Key and Lough Arrow.

Taking advantage of O'Donnell's absence from his own territory, George Bingham (the younger) in command of the Queen's troops in Sligo, sailed from that port to Lough Swilly ; he there landed, plundered the Carmelite monastery of Rathmullen, in the barony of Kilmacrennan, county Donegal, carried away the vestments, chalices, and everything of value, and on his way back, plundered Tory Island, an island fortress, which from the time of the mythical Balor, had been a depository for valuables.

Although the wealthy and more accessible monasteries within the Pale, wherever English rule was dominant, had been suppressed, and their estates escheated in 1539, yet, in remote and obscure localities, or parts of the country still ruled by native chiefs, therefore practically beyond reach of the law, monasteries continued, in a manner, to exist for nearly a century ; in Tirconnell they were scrupulously protected by the O'Donnells.

In consequence of the profanation of the Carmelite monastery, and of the island blessed by St. Columbkille, the Four Masters state that " God did not allow him " (Bingham) " a long period without avenging it on him."

Men who know to a certainty what will happen, may indulge in prophetic expressions of this nature. A king of the East Saxons who had good-naturedly dined with an excommunicated person, was told by the Saxon Saint Cedd, that he would soon die in the house in which he had sinned, and when the well-meaning but unfortunate king was murdered as foretold, the prophetic foresight of the saint was highly praised. There is also the prediction of St. Aidan, with regard to a king who had put in practice the maxim, that discretion was the better part of valour ; a king so meek, the saint feared, was not likely to be long-lived, and that fear was speedily realised.

Tuathal, king of Ireland, had banished his rival, Diarmaid, from his Court, who, one day strolling along the banks of the

<sup>1</sup> *MS. R. I. A.* The principal positions of the English in Sligo were well-selected, and placed in the most important passes ; the *MS.* thus describes Sligo : " The castle on the banks of the old river from which flows the flood that is after it, called the Sligo," &c.

Shannon, found Saint Ciaran planting the first pole of a wooden Church. "Plant the pole with me," said the saint to Diarmaid, "and let my hand be above your hand on it, and your hand, and your sovereign sway shall be over the men of Erin before long."

Diarmaid had a foster-brother in his train who, on hearing the prophetic words of the saint, formed the resolution of fulfilling them. He immediately sprang on horseback, gained access to the presence of the king, and slew him. It is needless to recount how, on Tuathal's death, Diarmaid's friends immediately proclaimed him king of Ireland, or that in Diarmaid St. Ciaran found a munificent patron.<sup>1</sup>

Bingham was assassinated in the month of June by one of his officers, Ulick Burke, son of Redmond-na-scúab (*i.e.*, Redmond of the brooms). Burke imagined he had been insulted<sup>2</sup> some time previously by George Bingham, "and by the English in general;" certain of protection from O'Donnell, he determined to be avenged on Bingham, as "the English in general" formed a body too numerous to encounter with hope of success. Burke waited his opportunity; he saw Bingham retire to his private apartments in the castle of Sligo with but few attendants, and

<sup>1</sup> "O'Curry's Lectures," pp. 59-60.

<sup>2</sup> P. O'Sullivan Beare states that Ulick Burke was vexed because the Irish soldiers who had accompanied George Bingham into Tirconnell had not received a fair proportion of the booty carried off from that country; his words are as follows: "In Connachta, Georgius Binghamus, Iunior, Sligacham arcem cum peditibus ducentis, quorum pars erant Iberni, tenebat. In qua præsidij causa relicto Vlligo Burko Raymundi filio nobili Ibero cum parte militum ipse cum cæteris in Vltoniam doubus phasellis vectus Rathmelanem municipium Macsuinnij Fanidi, qui tunc aberat, inuadens monasterium Carmelitarum diripit, religiosis in arcem fugatis. Onustus præda Sligacham revertitur. Cum divideretur præda milites Iberni iure suo fraudati Vlligo videntur; qui cum iisdem agit, quemadmodum Binghami et Anglorum iniurias vleiscantur. Diem qua castellum illis adimat, constituit. Ea cum venisset, Iberni Anglos aggrediuntur. Binghamus ab Vlligo pugione confossus, et cæteri, vel occisi, vel fuga salutem petentes deuastatæ religiosæ domus Carmelitarum poenas sacrilegi luerunt. Arx Odonello traditur, qui, in ea Vlligum præsidio præfecit. Sub idem quoque tempus Baleannotam castellum Georgio Binghamo Maiori Tumultachus, et Cathalus Macdonachæ eripiunt."—*Tom. 3, lib. 3, c. iii., fol. 139.*



these few, Burke's friends; he then entered the chamber, demanded reparation, suddenly drew his sword, slew Bingham, and cut off his head; with the aid of his own followers, ten men of the sept of the Burkes, who were in the service of the English, he secured the castle, and despatched a messenger with the tidings to Ballyshannon, then garrisoned by the troops of O'Donnell, who, on receipt of the news, hastened from Tyrone to his new possession, and at the gate was met by the assassin. With hands red with the blood of his former master, Burke now welcomed his new master, and handed over to him the keys of the castle.

A Captain Taylor appears to have been also implicated in this assassination, for, on the capture of Dunboy castle, in 1601, he was one of the few officers of the garrison who were granted quarter, only, however, to be conveyed to Cork,<sup>1</sup> there tried by Carew as an accomplice in Bingham's murder, and he was hanged in chains near the city gate.

The septs in insurrection against the English, and those who had been outlawed, or driven by the Bingham from Sligo into Ulster, on hearing of this murder, and the capture of Sligo, flocked to the standard of O'Donnell, whose allies in Connaught now comprised the Lower Burkes, the MacDonnells, the O'Conors of Roscommon, O'Rorke, MacDermot, and MacDonough. In the space of a month O'Donnell succeeded in welding together a confederation of septs from Erris to Bundrowse, and in obtaining possession of most of the castles in that tract of country.

Well pleased with the blow thus struck against the Government, O'Donnell returned to Tirconnell, and there learned that MacLeod of Arran had landed in Lough Foyle with six hundred mercenaries, whom he at once took into his service. With these re-enforcements he crossed the Erne, Bundrowse, Bunduff, Garvogue, and Ballysodare rivers, into Tireragh, thence over the Ox mountains into Leyny; he pillaged part of Mayo, and sent predatory expeditions as far as Tuam, devastated the entire country, and drove off the flocks and herds.

<sup>1</sup> "Where, being found by due proof that Taylor was one of the principal murderers of his Captain, George Bingham, at Sligo (1595), besides an infinite number of other foul and traitorly acts, he was shortly after, without the city of Cork (not far from the North Gate), hanged in chains."—*Pacata Hibernia*, p., 577.

Perceiving that O'Donnell had managed to elude him by slipping past to the westward, Sir Richard Bingham, who was at Boyle, mustered fifteen companies of horse and foot, and marched to the defiles of the Curlew mountains, in order to intercept O'Donnell on his return; but the latter once more evaded an encounter, by taking his way through the baronies of Costello, Leyny, and the lower part of Tirerrill, across the bridges of Collooney, Ballysodare, and Sligo. In this long march O'Donnell showed a consummate mastery of the freebooting tactics of the Irish; also the strong and universal devotion to his cause was plainly evinced, and the secrecy of the peasantry as to his movements, enabled him to spread devastation without awakening the vigilance of the numerous military posts, till too late to be of avail. It was his policy to prolong the contest without coming to a decided engagement, and to leave the task of thinning the Saxon ranks to climate rather than to the sword; the effect of the climate on the health of the English troops was, in those days, most remarkable.

Bingham started in pursuit of O'Donnell, who covered his retreat with a large body of cavalry, and retired to Glencar, well aware that his wary adversary would not attempt to follow into that defile, with its narrow paths and forest-clad declivities. Bingham made the monastery of Sligo his head-quarters, and prepared for a siege of the castle. On the following day O'Donnell despatched a party of horse to reconnoitre; they advanced as far as *Raith-da-britog*,<sup>1</sup> a hill overlooking the town from whence

<sup>1</sup> *Raith-da-britog*, now called Greenfort. Its ancient and circular form has disappeared, for the present remains are those of the fort constructed in 1641, repaired and enlarged in 1688 and 1689-1692. It commands the entire town of Sligo. In the Down Survey it is written Rath, *alias* Rathi-britteck. In the "Survey of Houses" in the town of Sligo, 1663, this locality is written Ratabritogue, *alias* Forthill, and is described as a quarter-land belonging to O'Connor Sligo, containing 100 acres, the fee-simple of which, at eight years' purchase, was then worth £20. In the deed of partition of the Sligo Estate, dated 21st July, 1687, the townland in which it is situated, now called Rathquarter, is there designated Ragh-tabretoke, and Rathavritoge, *alias* Rath. According to O'Donovan, *Rath-da-bhritog*, signifies Dabhritog's rath or fort, the name of some chief in days of yore. The Rev. J. A. French gives, as the reading of W. M. Hennessy, who is not only the first of living Irish scholars, but also the

they had a good view of the English encampment. Captain Martin, nephew to Sir Richard Bingham, and commander of his horse, described by the Four Masters as “a proud and haughty youth,” perceiving the enemy’s scouting party on the hill, and being of a fiery and ardent temperament, immediately sprang to saddle, crossed the bridge, and advanced to the attack. O’Donnell’s reconnoitring party greatly out-numbered, immediately retreated, pursued by the English, who, however, failed to overtake them.

When a report of this skirmish had been made to O’Donnell, he conceived the idea of decoying the English into an ambuscade in the same locality. Accordingly one hundred of his best horsemen and three hundred archers, picked men, were placed in ambush, well concealed, within a mile of the town of Sligo. A small party of horse was despatched to the banks of the Garvogue, to decoy the English out of the town; they had strict orders not to turn on their pursuers or attempt to engage them, until they had been drawn well past the ambuscade.

The stratagem succeeded; no sooner had the steel caps of O’Donnell’s decoy appeared near the borders of the stream,<sup>1</sup> than Captain Martin proceeded to charge them with a large body of

most eminent amongst our Celtic Topographers, *rath* *oabrittoġ*, the Rath of Da-Brittoġ (or Brittan). Brittoġ and Brittan are diminutive forms of a name *Britt*; the particle *Da*, in the name *Da-Brittoġ*, is a devotional prefix, signifying “thy” frequently used in connection with the names of Irish saints, &c.

<sup>1</sup> P. O’Sullivan Beare states that Roderic, the brother of O’Donnell, and MacDavitt crossed the river, but his account of the transaction is not very correct. It is as follows: “Sequente autumnno, sub quod tempus Norris cum Onello minus prospero Marte contendit, Richardus Binghamus ad Sligacham recuperandam, & occisi consanguinei pœnas de Vlligo sumendas facit expeditionem. Vlligum Sligachæ obsidione cinctum oppugnat. Vlligus cum propugnatoribus egressus pro munitionibus quotidie certat. Odonellus obsidionem soluturus cum mille, & sexcentis militibus auxilia venire festinat. Apud Duraranem in hostis conspectu tentoria pandit. Duobis primis diebus interlabens flumen vtriusque partis equitatus adequitans iaculis leuiter vltrocitroque velitatur. *Tertio die Rothericus Odonelli frater cum Felmio Macdaveto, & alio equite fluvium traiecit castra contemplatur.* In illum Martin Anglus qui in Binghami exercitu præstantissimus eques habebatur, procurrit, turma sua, cuius dux erat, stipatus. Rothericus admissis equis ad suos adcurrit. Martin sequens suorum primus vadum trajiciebat. Quem Felmus conversus



troopers. The Irish at first retreated slowly, but the pursuit was so close and hot that they were soon forced to put their steeds to their utmost speed; one of their number, Felim Reagh MacDavitt,<sup>1</sup> despite his utmost exertions was, owing to the sudden lameness of his horse, out-distanced by his companions; perceiving the inutility of his efforts to escape, he turned on his pursuers, resolved to sell his life dearly. The foremost man chanced to be Captain Martin, who, with uplifted arm, rode at him to cut him down; MacDavitt made a rapid thrust at his adversary, which took effect under the arm thus left unprotected by his armour. Martin fell mortally wounded, and on the fall of their leader the English reined up, ceased the pursuit, and in this way escaped the snare laid for their destruction. A temporary litter was hastily formed to carry the wounded officer to the monastery, where he expired shortly after his arrival. O'Donnell, on perceiving the collapse of his stratagem through this encounter, was at first greatly enraged with MacDavitt, but became reconciled to his failure on learning the death of Martin, and that MacDavitt had only turned on his pursuers in self-defence.

Bingham vowed vengeance for the death of his kinsman, and for the purpose of breaching the castle walls, commenced the construction of an engine in ancient parlance termed a "Sow;" it was formed of thick planks and rafters, which were taken from the dormitories of the monks, from the latticed screen in the Abbey dividing the chancel from the nave, in short every available material in the monastery was utilised. This construction, bound with iron and covered with layers of cowhide, was proof against musketry fire, or any firearms of that day, and it was provided with wheels. One night after dark the "Sow," filled

hasta traiectum, & interfectum in ipso flumine equo deturbat, & ipse cum Rotherico, & alio commilitone incolumis euasit. Postero die obsidionis quarto, Binghamus, obsidio relicto domum redit, quem Odonellus secutus missilibus carpit."—*His. Cathol. Iber. Compend. tom 3, lib. 3, c. iii., fol. 140.*

<sup>1</sup> Felim Reagh MacDavitt. A vivid remembrance of him is still retained in the traditions of the barony of Inishowen, county of Donegal. He was head of the clan of that name, a branch of the O'Dohertys, and was the same man who afterwards burned the town of Derry, from which circumstance the MacDavitts are even to this day called by their Presbyterian neighbours "Burnderrys."—*O'Donovan's Notes to Four Masters.* Connellan states that the Davitts, or Davids, were a branch of the Burkes of Mayo.

with soldiers, sappers and miners, was slowly rolled forward and planted against one of the towers of the castle. Working parties, protected in this manner, commenced to undermine the wall.

Within the castle, the engineers proved equal to the emergency, for whilst the loopholes and windows commanding this strange engine were all manned, and a hot fire was poured on it, huge masses of rock, carried to the battlements, were cast down on the roof of the "Sow" and crashed through it, the wall also had been pierced and loopholed to enable the garrison to fire with greater effect. Galled by this terrible fusillade, the English were unable to effect a breach in the wall, and were finally forced to abandon both engine<sup>1</sup> and siege. Bingham,<sup>2</sup> with vengeance unsatisfied, retreated across the Curlews to Roscommon.

<sup>1</sup> This engine of war, minutely described in "Ledwick's Military Antiquities," is mentioned in the "Pacata Hibernia" and in "Borlace." A similar contrivance was used so late as 1689 by Sarsfield in his siege of the same castle. Like the wooden horse used by the Greeks at the siege of Troy, the "Sow" was filled with armed warriors, and was sufficiently large to contain probably upwards of fifty men who were completely protected. Sir George Carew, in his "Pacata Hibernia" (*Vol. 1, p. 124, Dublin edition*), gives the following description of one of these engines: "The castle therefore they besiege and placed an engine, well known in this country, called a Sow, to the walls thereof to sapp the same. But the Defendants did so well acquit themselves in a sally as they tore the Sow in pieces, made her *caste her pigs*, and slew twenty-seven of them dead in the place." P. O'Sullivan Beare calls this machine "*muchum Bellicum*," and gives a brief but clear description of the siege of the Castle of Sligo: "*Neque Binghamus quidem dormit. Tomoniæ & Clanrickardæ Comites Ibernæ euocat: Connactæ delectum habet: Midhienses presidarios, et equites Angloibernos recipit. Cum signis militaribus viginti quatuor Sligacham obsidione vallatam oppugnat. Vlligus Burkus cum propugnatoribus egressus cum munitionibus acriter dimicat. Tandem ab oppugnatorum multitudine in arcem compulsus, ex turribus pinnis, fenestris, et reliquis munitionibus missilia iaculando hostes arcet. Regij muchum bellicum machinamentum militibus subter agentibus arcis muro admouent murumque forare, & subruere incipiunt, Vlligus magnæ molis trabe funibus ligata ex arcis fastigio nunc dimissa, nunc in altum sublata muchum & milites, qui sub eo latebant, conterit. Odonellus obsessis auxilio veniens appropinquat. Binghamus fugit. In oppugnatione regij sexcenti milites obierunt. Arcem vero quod erat tam laboriosum defendere, Odonellus demolitur.*"—*His. Cathol. Iber. Compend. tom. 3, lib. 3, c. iv., fol. 140-1.*

<sup>2</sup> Bingham seems to have been specially obnoxious to the native Irish, and was shortly afterwards removed from the government of Connaught. He was, however, promoted to the higher, though less onerous, post of

After the retreat of Bingham's troops, O'Donnell returned to Tirconnell and dismissed his Scottish auxiliaries, then retraced his steps across the Erne to Sligo, and dismantled the castle, fearing that a second attempt of Bingham might prove more successful.

In the month of December O'Donnell again marched into Connaught, and from Sligo he crossed Traholly strand, passed through Tireragh, and across the river Moy into Mayo. He was at this period in the plenitude of his power, and even held a species of Court of Claims, where the contending chiefs of the country were content to receive their titles, as dispensed by him. He settled all disputes amongst the Burkes relative to the lordship of Tirawley; in fact, with the exception of Clare, then popularly supposed to be included in the province, there was not a county in Connaught in which either all, or the greater number of the septs, were not in alliance with him. From Bundrowse, to Connemara, from the Moy to the Shannon, O'Donnell appointed and deposed whomsoever he pleased, and within the above limits he at this period held almost regal power.

After his return through Tireragh he nominated Teige, son of Teige Riavach, to be the O'Dowd.

Marshal of Ireland, but did not long survive his recal. He died in Dublin in 1598. His remains were transported to England, and were thought worthy of interment in Westminster Abbey. The inscription on his monument thus records his career :—

*“ To the glory of the Lord of Hosts. Hereunder resteth Sir Richard Bingham, Knight, of the ancient family of the Bingham, of Bingham-Melcomb, in the county of Dorset, who, from his youth, was trained up in military affairs, and served, in the time of Queen Mary, at St. Quintins, in the western islands of Scotland, and in Britain; in the time of Queen Elizabeth, at Leith, in Scotland; in the Isle of Candy under the Venetians; at Cabo Chrio; at the famous battle of Lepanto, against the Turks; in the civil wars of France; in the Netherlands; and at Smerwick, where the Romans and Irish were vanquished. After, he was made Governor of Connaught, where he overthrew the Irish Scots, expelled the traitorous O'Rourke, suppressed divers rebellions, and that with small charges to Her Majesty, maintaining that province in a flourishing state by the space of thirteen years: finally, for his good service, was made Marshal of Ireland and General of Leinster, when at Dublin, in an assured faith in Christ, he ended this transitory life the 19th of January, 1598, æt. 70.”*

*“ This is done by Sir John Bingley, sometime his servant.”*



O'Hara Riavach in Leyny, the O'Hara.

Maurice Cooch, son of "Breeches" MacDonogh, the MacDonogh of Tirerrill.

Roderick, son of Hugh, the MacDonogh of Corran.

Each to be head of his respective sept within the county of Sligo.

O'Donnell, having received hostages from them, returned to Donegal.

There was no desire on the part of the Crown to drive either O'Neill or O'Donnell to extremities, gladly would both have been permitted to enjoy their honours and inheritance if they would but live in peace and fulfil their pledges of loyalty. Early in 1596 the Queen sent a commission, authorising Sir John Norris and Sir G. Fenton to promise pardon and restoration of lands and goods to the insurgent chiefs. O'Neill was inclined to make his submission, but O'Donnell was firm in carrying on the rebellion, and his advice was followed by the other chiefs. The negotiations were still pending when three Spanish vessels reached the coast of Donegal, carrying 200 men, military stores and letters from the King of Spain to the Irish chiefs, promising aid, and urging perseverance in their exertions for the Catholic religion. O'Donnell, to whom these succours had been sent, quickly turned them to account. Theobald Burke had applied to him for aid against Sir John Norris, who had overrun his territory in Mayo, and was there encamped on the banks of the river Robe. O'Donnell immediately hastened to his relief, traversed Carbury and Leyny, in Sligo, and Gallen, in Mayo, then pitched his camp on the opposite bank of the river Robe. The two armies remained confronting each other in a state of inactivity, but failure of provisions compelled Norris to break up his encampment and proceed to Galway, leaving, however, strong garrisons in the various fortresses. O'Donnell, who had been assisted in this expedition, by the two MacDonoughs, the two O'Haras, and O'Dowd, then returned to Tirconnell.

In the autumn of this year O'Connor Sligo, after his return from England, made an attempt, with the aid of some English troops, to re-assert his authority in Sligo. He held possession of the castle of Ballymote, supported by MacDonough, of Collooney, together with the O'Harts of Carbury, ever unwavering in their

loyalty to O'Connor.<sup>1</sup> A force was thereupon hastily levied early in 1597 by O'Donnell, who plundered and harried all the adherents of O'Connor, and formed an encampment on the Slieve Dæane range. From that elevated position he kept watch on any movements directed against him either by O'Connor or by the main body of the English, and there awaited the arrival of re-enforcements hastening to him from the various quarters where they had been billeted during the winter. Towards the close of January all had assembled, and O'Donnell descended into Tirerrill (*Triochad-Ced-na-u-Oilella*), thence passed through Corran into Roscommon, at the head of 2,000 foot and 200 horse. He ravaged the plains of Connaught, laid waste Roscommon, attacked and took the town of Athenry, which had had barely time to recover from the effects of its former sack; he stripped the inhabitants of their clothing, turned them out in a state of nakedness, carried off every article of value, and set fire to the town. O'Donnell next made an attack on Galway, was repulsed, then retired with his booty by the same route. The greater portion of the flocks and herds captured, were despatched for safety across the Erne into Tirconnell. A camp was then formed by him in the parish of Calry, to the north of the town of Sligo, in order to keep watch on the movements of O'Connor, who, in the meantime, had collected a considerable force, and joined by a small body of English, contemplated the occupation of the town of Sligo, which he had almost succeeded in reaching, when O'Donnell moved into it with a powerful force, pursued his opponent, overtook his rear-guard on Traholly strand, routed them, and compelled O'Connor to retire discomfited. For the purpose of carrying on the war against O'Connor, he left a band

<sup>1</sup> Spencer thus writes of Sligo in this year: "All the countie of Sligoe . . . is like to escheat to her Majestie for the rebellion of their present possessors. The which two counties of Sligo and Mayo are supposed to contain almost 3,000 plowlands, the rent whereof rateably to the former I value almost at £6,000 per annum." In his "View of the State of Ireland," he further suggests that a garrison of 500 men be stationed in the fort on the river Erne, and garrisons stationed at Belleek and Ballyshannon, which "will serve for all occasions in the County of Sligo, being near adjoining thereto, so as in one night's march they may be in almost any place thereof, when need shall require them."



of his mercenaries in Sligo under command of Niall Garv O'Donnell. Niall so devastated the lands of all O'Connor's adherents, that finally the chiefs of the country were only too glad to make submission to O'Donnell.

At this period the Lord President of Connaught was Sir Conyers Clifford, an officer who had distinguished himself in most of the campaigns of his age; his munificence and affable manner conciliated many of the Connaught chiefs. O'Connor having obtained from Sir Conyers a pardon for his relative, Theobald Burke (commonly known as Theobald-na-long, *i.e.*, Theobald of the Ships), prevailed on Clifford to proceed into Tirawley, and drive out the Burke then in possession; he took refuge with O'Donnell, who at midsummer returned, reinstated Burke, and for his protection, left a considerable force under command of his brother, Roderick O'Donnell. O'Connor and Theobald-na-long were despatched by Clifford to expel O'Donnell's nominee; they were successful, and Clifford, with fifteen hundred of his best troops, took up a position at the Castle of Collooney, by which route he considered the insurgents must pass, in the event of their being ejected from Tirawley. Clifford's surmise proved to be correct. O'Donnell's forces retreated into Tireragh, and during the night crossed the Ox mountains, carrying with them all available property. What a scene may be conjured up to the mind's eye! The exodus of almost the entire population of Tirawley; crowds of sullen men, terrified women, and wailing children, flocks and herds driven wildly before them, stream along, all in the same direction. These refugees flying from the horrors of war, if once across the bridge of Collooney, may consider themselves tolerably secure. Now and again the crowds look back, and if a cloud of dust rise aloft at ever so remote a distance, it serves to give fresh impulse to the movement of their weary limbs. All unsuspecting, they come hurrying on into the very jaws of the lion, and Roderick O'Donnell and Burke learn only just in time the near presence of Clifford.

Under cover of the darkness they halted in the neighbourhood of Collooney; the herds with their drovers, the women and the children made a considerable détour, and crossed the river at some distance from the castle; the troops forded the stream much nearer to the walls, and both parties gained the opposite



bank unperceived by the garrison. The fresh morning breeze conveyed to the slumbering soldiers the sounds of bellowing cattle, and the shouting of their drovers. The English were aroused, their horse started in pursuit, flocks and herds were all captured, and their defenders slain; but the main body of the Irish troops was, by this diversion, enabled to elude pursuit, and to effect their retreat into Tirconnell.

In July, Clifford, joined by O'Connor, Theobald-na-long, and various other chiefs, marched through Sligo against O'Donnell, for the purpose of thus co-operating with the army which had advanced into Tyrone, under command of the Lord Deputy Borrough, against O'Neill, who was the guiding spirit of the rebellion. On arriving upon the banks of the Erne, Clifford found all the fords strongly guarded by O'Donnell, but he resolved to force the passage at *Bel-atha-cul-uain*, about half a mile to the west of Belleek. Here he passed the river, notwithstanding a bloody resistance, in which Morogh O'Brien, Baron of Inchiquin, was wounded whilst leading on his men; he fell off his horse, and was drowned by the weight of his armour. Inchiquin and O'Connor Sligo vied with each other in valour.<sup>1</sup>

The Annals furnish a lengthened narration of various conflicts between the combatants, of which the following is a brief outline. Clifford laid siege to the castle of Ballyshannon, met with an unexpectedly vigorous resistance, and lost a great number of men; in one of the encounters under the walls O'Connor was wounded. Of this affair, the account given by O'Donnell's biographer makes an impartial reader suspect that his large estimate of the English force must be greatly exaggerated, as he states that they were routed by the fire of the fort.

The Irish had now, by the careful training of O'Donnell, arrived at a high state of discipline; he contrived so dexterously to surround the English on every side, to cut off stragglers, and to intercept supplies, that, in the course of a few days Clifford

<sup>1</sup> "In ipso vado, vt alias, Oconchur, & Maurus Baro de virtute certabant, & dum vterque alterum præcedere conatur, Maurum suus equus in alveum lapus discutit, & Maurus armorum pondere grauis in inum flumen haustus amplius non extitit. Cliffordus vadum trajectus frustra repugnantibus paucis ab Odonello dispositis arcem quatuor tormentis oppugnat."—*P. O'Sullivan Beare. Fol. 161.*

found it necessary to retreat, on learning that O'Rorke on the one side, and O'Neill on the other, were advancing to the relief of the castle. Clifford abandoned part of his battering train, and decamped precipitately; by the celerity of his movements he managed to place some distance between his own force and his opponent before his retreat was discovered. O'Donnell hastily assembled his forces, and pursued as far as the northern bounds of Carbury, where the desultory exchange of fire ceased, for his musketeers had started in haste, terrible torrents of rain had fallen, their powder became unserviceable by the wet, and their weapons were rendered useless. The pursuit therefore ceased; Clifford retreated leisurely on Sligo, and the following day crossed the Curlews to Boyle.

By the repulse at this fort, and other disastrous engagements, the English were greatly dispirited, and the hopes of the insurgents rose in proportion. In revenge for the abandonment of his cause, and for having been one of his most active opponents at Ballyshannon, O'Donnell decided to make a raid on O'Connor Roe of Roscommon—a difficult undertaking, unless he could succeed in surprising O'Connor, who lived in an intricate, thickly-wooded country, abounding with fastnesses, into which, on the slightest alarm, cattle could be driven;—he was also aware that O'Connor had obtained O'Rorke's promise to give timely warning of any intended advance upon him by O'Donnell, and therefore, after he had pitched his camp to the south-east of Glencar, O'Donnell despatched a messenger to O'Rorke, with a request that he should visit him in his camp. Thus thrown off his guard, O'Rorke imagined O'Donnell would remain quietly encamped until his arrival, and consequently neglected to give warning to O'Connor; no sooner, however, had the messenger departed than O'Donnell broke up his encampment, marched to the foot of the Curlews, and unwilling to cross the mountains by daylight, there halted, to allow his troops rest. At dusk he passed over and descended into Roscommon; the first dawn of day saw his foraging parties dispersed over the country, which was totally unprepared for such a visit; scarcely a single head of cattle, as far as the Slieve Baune mountains, escaped; they were driven through the defiles of the Curlews into Tirconnell. O'Rorke and O'Connor had been completely outwitted.

In 1598 a general rising took place in Ulster, consequent on the defeat of the English at "the yellow ford," by O'Neill and O'Donnell; rebellion also ran riot over Connaught, the English garrisons could hardly show beyond their walls.

Ballymote, which had been in possession of the English for thirteen years, was recaptured in the summer of this year by Tomaltach and Cathal duv MacDonough of Corran. The possessors then put the fortress up to auction, to the highest bidder, whether Celt or Saxon. Sir Conyers Clifford and O'Donnell bid against each other for the purchase of the castle from the MacDonoughs, who finally surrendered it to O'Donnell for £400 in cash, and 300 cows, seemingly a very high price, taking into consideration the difference in currency. O'Donnell understood well the strength and strategic importance of the place; by possession of it he was enabled to drive flocks and herds from Tirconnell into Sligo, where they could graze unmolested on the rich pasturages of Corran, owing to the protection afforded by this fortress.

O'Donnell himself occupied the castle until Christmas when, being joined by his levies from the north, his restless activity found vent in an expedition against Clanricarde; having overborne the feeble resistance offered, he swept over the territory of that Earl, and returned with his plunder to Ballymote, where the cattle fattened in safety under its battlements. The surrounding districts suffered dreadfully; first, O'Donnell's forces plundered and ruined all the loyalists; immediately afterwards the English forces plundered and ruined all the Irish, the result being to leave that region a mere desert.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maurice Caoch MacDonough (son of Teige-an-Triubhis), when on a marauding incursion into Leitrim, was killed by the Brefsnians, and Conor Oge MacDonough of Ballindoon was elected MacDonough. The family of MacDonough retained some property in the county of Sligo till very recently. In 1688 Terence MacDonough of Creevagh was M.P. for the town of Sligo, distinguished himself during the Revolution, and died 1713. He was the only Roman Catholic Counsel that was admitted to the Irish Bar. This Terence was the lawyer who saved to Donough Liath O'Connor of Belanagare a small tract of property from confiscation. A bill of discovery had been filed against this Donough by Mr. French of French Park, under the Statute 1 Anne, chap. 32, but MacDonough managed the reply so ably, and being supported by the interests of Lord



In the following year (1599) O'Donnell continued to make Ballymote his head-quarters, and in the commencement of spring he set out on an expedition to the rich and well-stocked hills of Munster, in search of the spoil which pillaged Connaught could no longer yield; there was for this another motive no less powerful than love of plunder—the thirst for vengeance on the Earl of Thomond, who had joined the English in their attack on Tirconnell. Spreading his troops in his wonted manner over the country, O'Donnell swept together a vast booty of cattle, took the castle of Inchiquin, and returned to Ballymote with the spoils.

The English were wearied with the difficulties in Ireland; it was a source of enormous annual expense, for the rebellion seemed endowed with marvellous vitality; but Ireland could not be relinquished without injury to England; the King of Spain and the Pope were plotting against Elizabeth, and the conquest of Ireland was essential for the interests of England. A fatal choice was made in sending over, as Lord Deputy, the rash, vain-glorious, and incompetent Earl of Essex, who landed in Dublin with one of the most powerful, but most mismanaged, armaments ever sent to Ireland. In his unsuccessful campaign in Munster, Essex was accompanied by O'Connor Sligo, who had returned with him from the Court of Elizabeth, and on the disbandment of the southern army, O'Connor proceeded to join Sir Conyers Clifford in Connaught, where the insurgent forces amounted to 3,000 foot and 300 horse, commanded by O'Donnell.

In July O'Connor proceeded to MacDonough's castle of Collooney, the only castle in the county which then owned O'Connor's controul, the others had all revolted to O'Donnell. Shortly after his arrival in the fortress, his adherents captured some cattle grazing in the vicinity, and O'Donnell, to whom they belonged, seized with avidity the opportunity thus afforded of punishing O'Connor for his alliance with the English. In order to confine him to the castle, O'Donnell made a forced march with his horse, and as soon as his foot arrived, a cordon was drawn round the place

Kingston and Lord Taaffe, finally succeeded in restoring Donogh O'Connor to about seven hundred acres of land, which descended to his son Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare, the historian. The family of MacDonough has latterly fallen into obscurity.—*O'Donovan's Notes to Four Masters.*

so as to prevent the possibility of any attempt at escape from the fortress, for which its situation, in close proximity to extensive and intricate woods, afforded many facilities. To the south, O'Donnell's head-quarters faced the village of Collooney, and backed by the outskirts of the forest, thus formed an effectual barrier across the road over the Curlew mountains to Boyle; a large body of light horse was kept from sunset to sunrise ready mounted for the purpose of instant pursuit, in case O'Connor should attempt to run the gauntlet of the beleaguering army.

When the Earl of Essex received tidings of the predicament in which O'Connor was placed, he sent orders to Sir Conyers Clifford to meet him in the King's County; after a consultation of two days Essex decided to provide him with re-enforcements, and instructed him on his return to Athlone to despatch Theobald-na-long, and a detachment from the garrison of Galway, in some vessels then lying in that port, to skirt the western coast northward to the harbour of Sligo.<sup>1</sup> They accordingly sailed with provisions, wine, military appliances, and materials for erecting a strong fortress in Sligo, in order to hold the Ulstermen in check. A detachment of O'Donnell's forces marched along the coast keeping the fleet in view, so as to prevent a landing for the relief of Collooney. The fleet, on reaching its destination, remained at anchor in Sligo bay, awaiting further orders on the arrival of the English. Clifford's instructions were to proceed himself by the most direct route to Collooney castle to relieve O'Connor; he therefore mustered in Roscommon all the forces under his command, both English and Irish; in the number were Richard and Thomas, sons of the Earl of Clanricarde, O'Connor Don, O'Connor Roe, Theobald Dillon, and two

<sup>1</sup> The following curious description of the harbour of Sligo, written in 1614, is interesting:—

“The next and last towards the north is Sligo, where a ship of 200 tons may enter, so that she bring her side with her. The road is between a small island and the main, and eight fathoms water. A small fort in the island will command this road, and it has an excellent fishing for cod and ling without, and salmon within . . . . The County of Sligo has, of ancient or new English, none; of English transplanted out of the pale, Sir Willim Taffe, who has the town and abbey of Sligo, and the Lordship of Ballinot, some of the Nugents and others.”—*Carew MSS.* A description of Connaught, by Oliver St. John, in the year 1614.

of the MacSweenys who, though formerly closely allied with O'Donnell, had, in consequence of some dispute, renounced his cause. From Roscommon the combined forces moved to Tulsk, and thence, a distance of about fifteen miles, to Boyle, which they reached in the afternoon of Sunday, the 15th August. Clifford had now nearly 2,500 men under his command, including his Irish auxiliaries.

Timely intimation of these preparations was received by O'Donnell, and he despatched a garrison of 400 foot, under Burke, and MacSweeny of Fanat, to Sligo, so as to secure the town against a landing from the fleet in the bay. Niall Garv O'Donnell, with 200 horse, continued the blockade of Collooney castle, whilst O'Donnell himself encamped on the northern slopes of the Curlew range, near the celebrated pass of Ballaghboy; but finding it necessary to station other detachments to guard the various approaches to Sligo from the district stretching between Lough Key and Lough Gara, his strength in the defile was thereby reduced to about 2,000 men. He therefore caused a number of trees to be felled and placed on the path in the form of abattis,<sup>1</sup> so as to impede the advance of the English; and for security against surprise he stationed several scouts behind the brow of the hill, and a few further in advance, to keep watch on the movements of his adversaries, then encamped around the monastery of Boyle.

Clifford, on hearing that O'Donnell's force was weak at that particular point, decided, in opposition to the judgment of his most experienced officers, at once to force the pass; his men, after their long march, had to start fasting; when they asked for their rations, Clifford replied that they should have double supply before night.

At four in the afternoon, the army left the monastery, the advance-guard led by Captain Lyster, the van was formed by Sir Alexander Radcliffe's regiment, the main body was commanded

<sup>1</sup> O'Sullivan says that O'Donnell felled trees to render the passes of the mountain more difficult. His words are—

“O'Donnellus in ea montis parte quæ decitur Iter Pallidum (Bealach Bui) ærbores hinc inde cædi et in viâ sterni jubet ut venientibus impedimento, et resistenti sibi munimento sint: nam in eo loco statuit dimicare, citra quem duobus fere millibus passuum castra collocaverat.”—*Hist. Cathol.*, fol. 165.



by Clifford in person, and the rear-guard by Sir Arthur Savage. The horse, under Sir Griffin Markham, were drawn up in a small field at the foot of the declivity, in readiness for ascent as soon as the "Pare"<sup>1</sup> had been cleared of the enemy.

O'Donnell's scouts, from their vantage posts, heard the trumpets sound, and the roll of the drums, saw the bustle and stir, and the standards waving, as the English troops fell into battle array; they gave timely warning to their chief, who, as previously arranged, sent forward his kerns, musketeers, archers, and light-armed troops to meet the English, and render their ranks unsteady before they could reach the intricate portion of the mountain defile.

The day happened to be one of the great festivals of the Roman Catholic Church in commemoration of the Virgin Mary. O'Donnell fasted, and having received the Eucharist, harangued his troops in animated language, calling upon them to embrace the opportunity of revenge upon their foes. Great horror of the English had been impressed upon the minds of the native Irish, who imagined that one of the principal purposes of the Reformation was to impugn the Virginity of Mary, the Mother of our Saviour; of this idea, their clergy fully availed themselves to render the hatred of their flocks more irreconcilable, and thereby cause every Englishman to be an object of double abhorrence. History has not handed down to us the addresses of the clergy to the soldiery, but were they only half as animated and fiery as O'Donnell's, they could not fail to have had the effect of stringing the nerves of the rude warriors to a pitch at which nothing seemed impossible. The soldiers, following their leader's example, prepared for the approaching combat by confession and communion; the services had scarcely concluded, when Clifford's army appeared slowly advancing. O'Donnell, impatient for the moment which he felt might prove decisive of the fate of his country, harangued his men in their native language; he pointed out to them the great advantage of their position which, in itself, gave them decided superiority over their opponents.<sup>2</sup> "More-

<sup>1</sup> "Pare" evidently alludes to the ground which had been *pared* or cleared of trees.

<sup>2</sup> Charles O'Connor is open to the suspicion of having vastly improved

over," added he, "were we even deprived of those advantages I have enumerated, we should trust to the Great Dispenser of Eternal Justice, to the Dreadful Avenger of iniquity and oppression, the success of our just and righteous cause; He has already doomed to destruction those assassins who have butchered our wives and our children, plundered us of our properties, set fire to our habitations, demolished our churches and monasteries, and changed the face of Ireland into a wild, uncultivated desert. On this day, more particularly, I trust to heaven for protection—a day dedicated to the greatest of all saints whom these enemies to all religion endeavour to vilify—a day on which we have purified our consciences, to defend honestly the cause of justice against men whose hands are reeking with blood, and who, not content with driving us from our native plains, come to hunt us like wild beasts into the mountains of Doonaveeragh. But what! I see you have not patience to hear a word more! Brave Irishmen! You burn for revenge. Scorning the advantage of this impregnable situation let us rush down, and show the world that, guided by the Lord of Life and Death, we exterminated those oppressors of the human race; he who falls will fall gloriously, fighting for justice, for liberty, and for his country; his name will be remembered while there is an Irishman on the face of the earth, and he who survives will be pointed at as the companion of O'Donnell, and the defender of his country. The congregation shall make way for him at the altar, saying, *that hero fought at the battle of Doonaveeragh.*" This speech, delivered in a loud commanding voice, by a man who had never

upon the original; the reader may compare his version of the speech, as delivered by O'Donnell, with that given by O'Sullivan, in Latin—

"*Mariæ Deiparæ Virginis sacrosanctæ ope hostem Hæreticum cum antea semper vicimus, tum hodiè potissimum profligabimus Virginis nomine heri ieiunauimus, et hodiernum festum celebramus. Ergo eodum nomine fortiter, et animose cum Virginis hostibus pugnemus et victoriam obtinebimus.*"—*Fol.* 165-6.

According to Cucogny O'Clery, O'Donnell's speech was really better to the purpose than given by either O'Sullivan or O'Conor; he wound up with this peroration—"Fight bravely now while you have your bodies at liberty, and your weapons in your hands, for if you lose this day's battle you shall be deprived of your arms, and your bodies shall be confined in dungeons, and bound with hempen cords."

known defeat—a man whose courage was unquestionable, and whose strength and size were in unison with his high spirit, imparted enthusiasm to all.

The English troops, advancing along a narrow raised path which traversed the centre of a bog, reached the edge of a wood about half a mile broad, through this ran the highway; the gradient was gentle and equal, and the road broad enough to allow twelve men to march abreast. Emerging from the wood it skirted a high hill, situated to the left; this declivity and the adjacent ground were very boggy; to the right, about a musket-shot distant, stood a thick wood, and here the opposing forces came into collision. Sir Alexander Radcliffe succeeded in clearing this position of O'Donnell's light-armed troops, and drove the Irish from a barricade they had erected. Radcliffe, although wounded in the commencement of the struggle, continued to animate and encourage his men; but after an engagement, which lasted an hour and a half, his ammunition became exhausted; and whilst in the act of leading a charge of pikemen, he was again wounded by a musket-shot, and was borne to the rear in the arms of two of his officers; there was a heavy fire from the Irish musketeers in the thickets around, one of his supporters fell dead, and the next instant Radcliffe himself dropped mortally wounded. Discouraged by the absence of their leader, the van fell back suddenly on the supports, the supports on the main body, throwing it into confusion; and at this critical moment, O'Rorke, who had been stationed at the eastern extremity of the Curlews, hearing the noise of the conflict, moved with all haste to the assistance of O'Donnell. This fresh attack with a large force completed the disorder in the English ranks and rendered it irreparable; Sir Conyers Clifford, after fruitless efforts to rally them, was dragged away, breathless, by Sir John MacSweeny and another officer, "who, perceiving the disordered flight of the whole army (disparing to save their lyves by other means) persuaded him to retyre himself with them; when he reproovinge the baseness of his men, replied Romane lyke, that he would not overlyve that daies ignomynye. But that affection which moved Sr John McSwyne to use entreatyes, perswaded him now to practiz force, by which they caryed him from the pursewing rebels some few paces,



where, enraged with a consideration of the vildeness of his men, which he often repeated, brake from them in a fury, and turning head alone, alone made head to the whole troopes of pursewers, in the midst of whome, after he was strouke through the body with a pyke, he dyed fighting."

O'Donnell's harangue to his troops, and his bearing in the field, deserve the utmost eulogy, but ought not the fall of this heroic knight be also duly commemorated; history, as a rule, knows him only as the unfortunate commander of the English forces at the Curlews; "he died," in the words of the old chronicler,<sup>1</sup> "consecrating by an admyrable resolucion, the memory of his name to immortallitye, and leaving the example of his vertu to be intytuled by all honorable posterities."<sup>2</sup> To him may be applied, with a slight alteration, the lines commemorative of the death of a typical, although ideal, English hero—

"Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom,  
On noble "CLIFFORD'S" lowly tomb,<sup>3</sup>  
But, say, he died a gallant knight,  
With sword in hand for England's right."

The cavalry, stationed at foot of the hill, could perceive through the woods and glades the disorder into which the foot were thrown; they charged up the hill, to the left of the path down which the foot were flying, and, although the ground was alternately rocky, and boggy, they managed to make their way,

<sup>1</sup> *A Brief Relation of the Defeat in the Corleus, the 15th of August, 1599, by John Dymmock.* Irish Archæological Society, 1843. Dymmock was in Ireland at the time of the battle, and wrote his account as he "hard it related."

<sup>2</sup> "There died lykewyse, Godred Tirwhit, brother to Mr. Robert Tyrwhit of Kettleby, in Lyconshire, fighting by the syde of Sr Alex. Ratcliff, of whome cannot be sayde lesse, then that he hath left behinde him an eternall testimony of the noblenes of spiritt, which he deryved from an honorable famlye. But these went not alone, for they were accompanied to the gates of death by dyvers worthy, both lieutenants and ensigns, who were followed (for that they were not followed by them to fight) by 200 base and cowardly raskalls."—*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> The spot where Clifford was killed is still pointed out near the old road, called *Bealach-Buidhe*, in the townland of Garroo.

led on by Captain Jephson and Sir Griffith Markham;<sup>1</sup> they were themselves severely handled, but the short respite thus procured, enabled the disordered foot to retire over the ford into the plain, where the baggage had been left, from whence they proceeded to the abbey of Boyle.<sup>2</sup>

The loss of O'Donnell is set down at only one hundred and forty, killed, wounded, and missing, whilst that of the English amounted to two hundred, chiefly Anglo-Irish. Camden does not mention in numbers the actual loss of the English, only says in general terms, "Cliffordo una cum Alexandro Radcliffe de Ordsall ex equestri ordine et multis veteranis occisis."<sup>3</sup> The conduct of Clifford's foot was loudly condemned even by English writers; they were Irish and Anglo-Irish mercenaries, only half-

<sup>1</sup> "Sir Griffith Markham was shot through the arm with a musket, and though he bore the hurt admirable well for a day or two, and especially at the instant, yet ever since he hath kept his bed of it, and hath been in danger of his arm by the hurt, and of his life by an ague; but now he is, I hope, out of danger of both, and safe in Dublin."—Harrington's "Nugæ Antiquæ," Vol. ii., p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> "The rest which els had all perished were saved by the vertu of Sr Griffin Markam, who chardginge the pursewers in the head of my Lo : Southampton's troope, gave securitie to this ignominious flight, having in his chardge, the smaller bone of his right arm broken with the stroake of a bullet, and that which addeth moste to the commendation of his chardge is, that it was presented upon the narrow waye, between the two boggs before mentioned, and forced with the losse of some, both men and horses, into the bogg upon the right hand, where the rebells followed eagerly the execution of our men, untill the feare they apprehended upon the sight of our horses caused them to stay their pursuite, and to think upon their owne safetie."—*Dymmock's Account*.

<sup>3</sup> Fynes Moryson says the English lost only some 120 men, but P. O'Sullivan Beare asserts that 1,400 of the Queen's forces perished! "Perierunt ex regijs cum Cliffordo præfecto & Henrico Radcliffe alio nobili Anglo, mille & quadringenti, qui feré Angli, & Midhienses Angloibeni erant : nam Connachti propter locorum peritiam facilius sunt elapsi. Ex Catholicis centum quadraginta fuerunt vulnerati & desiderati. Capta sunt regiorum omnia feré arma, signa & tympana militaria, impedimenta & multæ vestes. Onellus, qui Odonello auxilio veniebat, duorum dierum itinere aberat. Cliffordi nece diuulgata Navalis classe Galveam reuehitur. O'Conchur sese Odonelli ærbitrio permittens ab eo in integrum Sligachæ principatum restituitur alijs donis cumulatus, & sacramento rogatus ipsi deinceps in Protestanto fore auxilio."



hearted in the business; for a contemporaneous writer<sup>1</sup> says: "Having not *Roman citizens*, but *Rascal soldiers*, who, as their commanders had been saved, had been worthy to have been half hanged for their rascal cowardliness."

O'Connor Don escaped with difficulty from the battle-field to Ballintubber. An ardent wish was expressed by O'Donnell that O'Rorke, whose troops were fresher than his own, should pursue him. "No," said O'Rorke, "O'Connor Don is my brother-in-law, and I have no enemy, and I never will, but those sons of foreigners, those Saxons who were the murderers of my father."

"Well then," said O'Donnell, "by the hand of my father, the O'Conors shall now suffer for their base apostasy, or O'Donnell shall be no more." So saying, he marched on Ballintubber. O'Donnell dragged his great gun to the heights commanding the castle, when the walls were soon battered, a practicable breach made, and O'Connor surrendered at discretion.

After the battle of the Curlews, a letter was sent to the constable of Boyle, with the body of Sir Conyers Clifford, giving permission to have it buried in the monastery of the Holy Trinity. Sir John Harrington condemns the Latin as bad, but says the sense was civil. The purport appears to be as follows:—

"To the constable at Boyle, greeting:

"Know that I have sent the body of the Governor to the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, out of respect to his memory and other reasons. If you wish to release my prisoners in exchange for the aforesaid body, I am ready to confer with you on

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Harrington; by whom also particulars of the pay and clothing of Elizabeth's troops are detailed at some length. The following is the outfit for an officer of the English service in 1599:—

A cassock of broadcloth	...	...	...	£1	7	7
A doublet of canvas, with silk lining and buttons	...	...	...	0	14	5
Two shirts and two bands	...	...	...	0	9	6
Three pairs stockings at 2/4 each	...	...	...	0	7	0
Three pairs of shoes at ditto	...	...	...	0	7	0
One pair of Venetians ( <i>i.e.</i> , long hose), with silver lace	...	...	...	0	15	4
Total	...	...	...	£4	0	10



the subject. At all events, the body will be honourably buried in the aforesaid monastery, and so farewell. Written at Gaywash, 15 August, 1599. In the meantime, put good burial clothes on the aforesaid body, and if you wish to bury the other knights, I will not prevent you doing so. **MACDERMON.**"<sup>1</sup>

"By this letter is too truly interpreted a troublesome dream of the governor's, which he had about a yeare before this defeat, when being wakened by his wife out of an unquiet sleepe, he recounted unto her, that he thought himselfe to have beene taken prisoner by O'Donnell, and that certen religious men (of compassion) conveied him into their monastery, where they concealed him, and so indeed as he dreamed or rather prophesied the monastery hath his bodye, the worlde his fame, and his friends the want of his vertu."<sup>2</sup>

Although the body of Sir Conyers Clifford was sent for interment to the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, O'Rorke caused his head to be severed from the trunk, and despatched to the Castle of Collooney to O'Conor Sligo, who, until it was displayed before his eyes, could not be persuaded of Clifford's fall.<sup>3</sup> It was accompanied with a message, that if Collooney Castle were not immediately surrendered, O'Conor Don's head should be sent in, to keep it company.

O'Conor Sligo, aware that there was no longer hope of being relieved, submitted at discretion to O'Donnell, who, however, reinstated both him and O'Conor Don in their territories. On

<sup>1</sup> "Conestabulario de Boyle, salutem :

"Scias quod ego traduxi corpus gubernatoris ad monasteriu Sanctæ Trinitatis propter ejus dilectionem, et alia de causa, si velitis mihi redire meos captivos ex prædicto corpore, quod paratus sum ad conferendum vobis ipsum ; alias, sepultus erit honeste in prædicto monasterio et sic vale—scriptu apud Gaywash, 15 Aug. 1599 : interim pone bonum linteamen ad predictum corpus, et si velitis sepelire omnes alios nobiles non impediā vas erga eos. **MACDERMON.**"

<sup>2</sup> *Dymmock's Brief Relation of the Defeat in the Corleus.*

<sup>3</sup> Clifford was regretted by the native Irish. The Four Masters state : "It was grievous that he came to this tragic end. The Irish of the Province of Meave (Connaught) were not pleased at his death ; for he had been a bestower of jewels and riches upon them ; and he had never told them a falsehood."

this occasion it was O'Donnell's policy to show clemency, the Queen thereby losing the co-operation of about 300 men.

When Theobald-na-long, riding at anchor in Sligo Bay with the Galway fleet, discovered the turn affairs had taken, he, with the usual pliancy of the age, at once changed sides, as did also several minor chiefs, previously allies of the English; whilst O'Donnell laid the country under contribution as far as the gates of Galway, the terror of his name extending from that town, to Loop Head.

It is curious to note how, in matters of war, as well as in politics —

“Applause

Waits on success; the fickle multitude,  
Like the light straw that floats along the stream,  
Glide with the current still and follow fortune.”

There was now a general impression in favour of the insurgents, which formed a main source of their strength. The Irish soldiery,<sup>1</sup> too, had profited by the lessons derived from their enemies, and the rebellion, therefore, assumed a serious character. The English troops in Connaught were so demoralised by the reverse on the Curlews, and the constant desertion which thinned their ranks, that it was considered expedient to distribute them in garrisons.

After O'Connor's submission, he received from O'Donnell, out of the immense booty swept in from the surrounding districts, a sufficient quantity of flocks and herds wherewith to stock his territory; also corn and the necessary appliances for cultivation of the soil, for the county “had been a waste, without dwellings or habitations for a long time till then.” The Northern chief could afford to be generous with the goods won by the sword from his weaker neighbours. As regards O'Connor, the Four Masters say, that this was a “beneficial change and an advantageous protection against adversity for him to join in that

<sup>1</sup> Moyson, speaking of the Irish soldiery at the time, observes: “The Irish kerne were at first rude soldiers, so as two or three of them were employed to discharge one piece, and hitherto they had subsisted especially by treacherous tenders of submission; but now they are grown ready in managing their pieces, and bold to skirmish in bogges and woody passages.”

friendship, and abandon the slow unprofitable promises made to him" (by the English) "from year to year till then." But O'Connor thus incurred the risk of certain forfeiture of his lands upon the suppression of the outbreak, and he would ultimately have benefited more by continuing his allegiance to the sovereign, who up to this time had ever supported him against his oppressor, O'Donnell.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1600, O'Donnell, with his Ulster forces, crossed the Erne into Connaught. At the Castle of Ballymote he was met by a gathering of all the chiefs, with their contingents, who held rule over the territories stretching from the river Suck to the Bundrowse, near Ballyshannon, and from the west of Tirawley, in Mayo; to the county of Cavan, amongst them being O'Connor Sligo, together with all the septs of the county. O'Donnell traversed Corran and the remainder of Connaught without opposition, and harried Thomond; dark columns of smoke from the burning farmsteads marked his track; he moved with astonishing rapidity; the distance covered must have averaged thirty or forty miles a day. This expedition to Loop Head, in Clare, at the mouth of the Shannon, and back again, was accomplished by him in from eight to ten days. He returned over the Curlew range, through Corran to Ballymote, and then dismissed his forces to their homes, suitably rewarded. This was the second foray made by O'Donnell to harass the Earl of Thomond and the Earl of Clanrickard, for their steady support of the Crown, and their determined enmity to himself and O'Neill; the two earls, unprepared, and quite unable to encounter O'Donnell, made no stand against him.

Towards the close of October, O'Donnell again proceeded to harry Thomond; he marched through Sligo to Ballymote, but was thence recalled by a message announcing that Niall Garv O'Donnell had, in his absence, betrayed him, and that the English were in possession of the Castle of Lifford.

As descriptive of the times, it may be mentioned that Mount-

<sup>1</sup> In this year (1599) that curious monument, still to be seen at the brink of the well of Skreen, in Tireragh, was erected by *Benmumhan og Ni Duibhgennain*, daughter of *Maelschlainn*, son of *Dubhthach oge*, son of *Dubhthach mor*, for the soul of her husband, *Vicar Eoghan MacDomhnail*.



joy, who had succeeded Essex as Viceroy, when writing to Elizabeth, stated that it gave him more trouble to govern friends than to suppress enemies, or to sow dissension amongst them. Among the many improvements in military affairs introduced by Mountjoy in conducting the campaign against the Irish, the principal and most important was his total disregard of weather or season. The climate of Ireland, now ameliorated by the cutting away of its forests, the draining of its marshes, and by other causes, was then far more severe than can now be readily conceived. Against this inclemency the English troops might be secured by expedients; but the imperfect clothing, the supplies, and the encampments of the Irish were totally unsuited to meet the exigencies of a winter campaign. This new departure soon produced important results. O'Donnell returned with all speed to Ulster, abandoned his intended expedition against Thomond, and in December was still engaged in the vain effort to wrest Lifford from the English, when tidings reached him that two ships laden with warlike stores, destined for himself and O'Neill, had cast anchor in the bay of Killala, on the coast of Mayo. He sent intelligence of this to O'Neill, and marched with a small force into Tireragh, despatching instructions for the ships to proceed to the harbour of Killybegs, in Donegal. He remained for a few days at Dunneill, near Dromore West, and there kept Christmas; then retraced his steps, and returned with O'Neill to Donegal, where many of the Northern chiefs were assembled in anticipation of the distribution of Spanish ingots. Philip III. was generous to the insurgents; twenty thousand pieces of gold, together with munitions of war, were landed in Telin Harbour, and were equally divided between the two great leaders, who in their turn, as each thought proper, rewarded their subordinate chiefs. O'Donnell, whilst thus engaged, received intimation that O'Connor Sligo had entered into an engagement to seize on his person and deliver him up to the English; he therefore instantly made O'Connor prisoner, and confined him on an island in Lough Esk, in Donegal. A slightly different version of this transaction is given by the "Four Masters," who state that O'Donnell either suspected or had positive proof that O'Connor was in secret treaty with the English; that he had been

promised by the Lord Justice a full pardon for his complicity with the insurgents, together with a re-grant of his territory from the Crown, upon again returning to his allegiance. O'Connor had married the Countess of Desmond, and to her son, the young Earl of Desmond, then in the Tower of London, had been also promised by the Crown, liberation from confinement and restoration to his dignities and territory. If this version be correct, O'Donnell, by his promptitude, nipped in the bud the intrigue of Mountjoy, whose genius in that direction made itself speedily felt throughout the kingdom; his maxim was to divide and conquer, a plan the more easy of accomplishment, as popular enthusiasm had begun to subside, and the current of reaction had already set in.

With the evident intention of assisting O'Connor, or of creating a diversion in his favour, Mountjoy ordered the young Earl of Clanrickard to proceed to Boyle, force the passes of the Curlews, and march on Sligo. O'Donnell, early apprised of this movement, advanced with great rapidity, placing himself in a strong position in front of Boyle. The opposing armies jealously watched each other for a time, but broke up their encampment after a few trifling skirmishes, and returned home, Clanrickard having discovered the failure of Mountjoy's plot of gaining over O'Connor, and O'Donnell having received intelligence that the English had taken possession of the monastery of Ballyshannon and fortified it. After leaving all his own "farmers and biatachs" in possession of the pasturage of the county, with a sufficient guard to protect them from pillaging bands, O'Donnell proceeded through Carbury northwards, to besiege the monastery of Ballyshannon; he failed, however, to retake it, despite an explosion of the garrison's powder magazine. On his return to the Castle of Ballymote, he received news of the long-expected Spanish invasion, which took place on the 23rd September. Had that event occurred during the rule of the incompetent Essex, or whilst the insurgents were in spirits and in strength, had the landing even been made in either Ulster or Connaught, there might have been more chance of success; but the locality selected for disembarkation was Kinsale.

"It was generally supposed by the Queen's officers that Sligo must have been the place of their destination. And had they

landed there, the town might have been easily fortified, was convenient for receiving succours by sea, and for uniting with the rebels; they would have had a fair country to possess, an easy way into Munster, into the heart of the Pale, and into those parts of Ulster where the royalists could not have supplied the garrisons who were to oppose them. However, by the necessity of drawing forces from the northern borders, Tirone was left more at liberty to march to the assistance of his foreign allies."<sup>1</sup>

From other writers it, however, appears that a small party of Spaniards did land in Sligo. Sir Robert Cecil wrote as follows to Sir George Carew: "Intelligence I received out of the North by one whom I employed thither, that the Spanish ship which long since came to Sligo, more than a fortnight past is returned for Spain, assuring Tyrone and O'Donnell that before Michaelmas Day the Spanish army, which did but attend his return, would come to Ireland, and though the ship be returned, yet some of the men are still remaining at Sligo."<sup>2</sup> On the 14th of the previous month (August), Sir George Carew wrote as follows to the Privy Council: "I did write to your Lordship in my last letter . . . of the landing of the Spaniards. Now the truth is, there landed one Spanish ship in Sligo, driven thither by a ship of her Majesty's. She landed 70 men, and there begin to fortify. The Captain is gone to O'Neyle, and is contented to lose his head if there be not 20 ships out of Spain within 15 days."<sup>2</sup>

Leaving sufficient garrisons in his castles in Sligo, and detachments of troops to guard his flocks and herds, O'Donnell speedily joined the invaders. The Connaught chiefs who accompanied him were O'Rorke, the two MacDonoughs, the brothers of O'Connor Sligo, the two O'Conors Roe, MacDermot, O'Beirne, O'Kelly, the two O'Flahertys, William and Redmond Burke; this force amounted to 2,800 men.<sup>3</sup>

In December, after the defeat at Kinsale of the Irish and Spanish combined forces, O'Neill returned to Ulster, and O'Donnell sailed for Spain, to solicit succours for a renewal of the war. He landed at Corunna on the 16th January, 1602. He was received kindly by Philip, who listened with the appearance

<sup>1</sup> Leland, Vol. ii., p. 395.

<sup>2</sup> Carew MSS.

<sup>3</sup> *Paçata, and other accounts.*



of generous sympathy to his complaints against their common enemy, and was promised every assistance in men and money. For nine tedious months O'Donnell suffered the penalties which too frequently await those who put their trust in princes. He again resolved to visit the king, but did not reach the end of his journey; he fell sick on the road, and died 10th September, 1602, in his 29th year.

Before O'Donnell embarked, the command of his troops was handed over by him to Roderick O'Donnell, who found it a difficult task to lead back the remnants of his shattered force to Sligo. They had to fight their way home, not merely against the English garrisons, but against the native Irish, their former allies. Every pass and defile was occupied; they were attacked at every step by the same septs, who but a few weeks before had made professions of the strongest friendship. Roderick at once assumed the chief command in Sligo; the keys of Ballymote Castle were handed to him by the Governor, Owen O'Gallagher, to whom they had been consigned by O'Donnell; the cattle, flocks, and property of the Ulstermen had been safely guarded throughout the baronies of Corran, Leyny, and Tireragh. The "Four Masters" eulogise the new ruler in these poetical words: "Good was the herd and shepherd who came to them there, for though numerous were the cattle flocks from neighbouring territories, which O'Donnell left his people on his departure from them, Roderick did not allow them to be restored despite of him, to any country from which they had been taken away; for he stationed in various places his soldiers and warriors, on the dangerous passes and undefended places of the country, so that no one would attempt to pass them, to plunder or attack any of his people."

Sligo was indeed fortunately circumstanced: the ghastliness of famine and desolation which the long war had produced was now somewhat counterbalanced by the retention and accumulation of these food supplies. Happy indeed was the lot of the county in comparison of parts of the southern province, for we have bequeathed to us a picture, a vivid and terrible picture, drawn by the nervous hand of the poet Spencer, depicting there, misery and famine almost incredible. This is how he describes the appearance of the surviving inhabitants: "Out of every corner

of the woods and glens they came creeping forth upon their hands, for their legs could not bear them; they looked like anatomies of death, they spake like ghosts crying out of the graves; they did eat the dead carrions, happy where they could find them, yea, and one another soon after, insomuch as the very carcases they spared not to scrape out of their graves; and if they found a plot of water-cresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast for the time, yet, not able long to continue there withal; there in a short space there were none almost left." Truly might it be said of this unhappy district, "*Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*"

In the summer, Sir Oliver Lambert, with a considerable force of English, took possession of Sligo, the approach to it being made by Ballyshannon, where a considerable English garrison was now kept, under command of Sir Henry folliott.<sup>1</sup> Cathbar, a member of the O'Donnell family, made submission to Lambert on his arrival, possibly thinking his fortress of Dunally<sup>2</sup> in too close proximity to the English. Lambert, with his new ally, then proceeded into Fermanagh to despoil the country.

Roderick O'Donnell made application to O'Rorke for aid to bring back to his allegiance his sub-chief, Cathbar O'Donnell, and also to oppose Lambert's expedition to the north; but as O'Rorke, at the time, purposed making his own submission, he refused assistance.

Lambert, on his return from Fermanagh, learned that Roderick O'Donnell had contemplated resistance to his progress northwards, and therefore decided to punish him. He directed a strong force to be sent from Athlone to attack Roderick from the south, whilst he, in person, advanced against him from Sligo. Roderick avoided being caught between the two armies, by causing all his flocks and herds in Corran, Leyny, and Tireragh, to

<sup>1</sup> The garrison left at the abbey of Boyle in the April of this year consisted, according to Moryson, Vol. ii., p. 129, of 1,000 foot and 62 horse, to afford protection to the new fort erected at Ballyshannon, of which Sir Henry folliott was Governor.

<sup>2</sup> *Dun-aille*, now Dunally, in the parish of Drumcliff, about three miles from Sligo; *Dun-aille* signifies the *dun*, or fortress of the cliff. There are other townlands in Sligo similarly named.—*MS. Letters, Ordnance Survey.*



be driven across the Curlews into Moylurg; and upon the return of the English forces to their garrisons, the creaghts drove back the cattle to their pasturages. Roderick then returned to Tirconnell, released O'Connor Sligo from imprisonment upon swearing fealty to him, and sent him to the county of Sligo to resume possession of his territory; but the position he occupied was, in a military point of view, untenable. Boyle to the south, Sligo to the north, both towns strongly garrisoned by the English, who held all the country lying between them in a vice-like grasp.

In the autumn the English again mustered at Boyle, and tried to force the pass of Ballaghboy, but after a rather severe skirmish they relinquished the attempt, Roderick O'Donnell and O'Connor having made a more serious resistance than was anticipated; they had also taken the precaution of collecting all the flocks and herds of the country in rear of their position on the Curlews, fearing that Lambert, in Sligo, might avail himself of the opportunity to drive them off.

When the English broke up their force at Boyle, O'Connor encamped at Ballysodare in order to keep watch on Sligo; he succeeded in capturing an English foraging party engaged in cutting the corn and green crops of the country, to supply forage for the garrison. In that position he remained for a month, and was then informed, by a letter from Mountjoy, of the death of the absent O'Donnell. Roderick and O'Connor assembled a council of war to discuss the situation; the majority did not at first believe in the authenticity of the intelligence, but finally, they decided to accept the favourable conditions offered by the Crown, and to submit. In the latter end of November Mountjoy proceeded to Athlone, and there, on the 14th December, Roderick O'Donnell and O'Connor Sligo arrived and made their submission, the death of O'Donnell having terminated all hopes of resistance.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "O'Connor Sligo, alledging many things in his own excuse, as the manner of O'Donnell's taking him and keeping him in prison, and submitted himself to her Majesty's mercy. Rory O'Donnell, albeit he had under him all his brother's followers and creaghts, yet did he both simply and absolutely submit himself to her Majesty's grace, without standing upon any conditions, but signifying his readiness to deliver such pledges as should be demanded of him, all such castles as Ballymore (Ballymote ?)



In considering the life of this great chief, it should be borne in mind that the historian whose pen has furnished most of the materials from which this account of O'Donnell's career is taken, himself an eye-witness of most of the deeds recorded, must necessarily have looked upon the stormy events of the period as if all had been brought about by the acts and influence of his own chief; to his view, O'Donnell was the head of the fierce struggle, whilst any close observer must perceive that he bore therein but a part, although a prominent part it is true, more especially as regards Sligo. O'Donnell was but one, of four powerful chiefs, whose bravery and resolution for some time held

and others in the County of Sligo) which he had gotten into his possession, and to do anything, that he might receive her Majesty's favour. Alledging further, that his father and grandfather had been true servitors, that he himself, with the privity of Sir Conyers Clifford, then Governor, had resolved to have served her Majesty against his brother, but upon the discovery of his purpose he was kept in irons (a matter well known to be true), and now most frankly offering his service (if he might be received) either here or beyond the seas, wheresoever her Majesty would be pleased to employ him."—(Moryson's History, Book iii., p. 231.)

Upon Mountjoy commencing his above-mentioned progress through the province, the following letter from Tyrone to O'Connor Sligo was intercepted:—

"We commend us unto you, O'Connor Sligo.

"We have received your letter, and as formerly we have written unto you, we have remained in Fermanagh well nigh this quarter of a year, and have written unto you, and to O'Donnell's son, and requested you to come and see us near Lough Erne concerning our counsels either for peace or war, and neither of you came thither to meet us. We thought that you and O'Donnell's son, and O'Rourk and O'Connor Roe, and ourselves as many of us as are of our faction, would have maintained war for a great time, and to that end we came to these parts, and have foregone to many of our own as have not risen with us: But seeing that O'Rourk (it it be true) and O'Connor have received protection, and that every one doth make peace for himself, we may easily be deemed men broken and not substantial in war: But concerning our counsel and advice which you write for, our advice unto you is neither to make peace nor cessation, but that peace or cessation which shall be made by all our consents and agreements; and if you do otherwise, stand to the hazard yourselves, for you shall not have my consent thereunto. O'Neal."—(Same, p. 230).

"When the Lord Deputy had returned from Galway to Athlone, and being advertised from Rory O'Donnell that he had lately done some service against O'Rourk, did by his letters of the 6th January give him thanks for

the scale against the power of Elizabeth. The historian and follower of O'Donnell resembles the soldier in the ranks, who, in the tumult of battle, sees but the movements of his own corps, and fancies that its isolated movements, alone can indicate victory or defeat. During the period when the events narrated in this chapter were taking place, two of the greatest insurrections that had ever occurred in Ireland were being carried on, that of Tyrone in the north, and of Desmond in the south; in general history, O'Donnell takes position rather as a powerful supporter of the former, than as a prime mover of the insurrection.

O'Donnell was most probably thoroughly religious. O'Neill

the same . . . . and with promise of that country to him and his heirs if he joined his forces to expel O'Rourk . . . . this should be no bar, but rather a furtherance to his hopes of having his brother's lands."—(p. 256, Book iii.)

On the 25th of Feb. the Lord Deputy wrote to the Lords in England:—

"In Connaught there is none (rebels) but in O'Rourk's country" (p. 273). "Upon Sir Neal Garvey's disloyal practices his lordship (some good portions of land being assigned to Neal Garvey) gave the rest of the late O'Donnell's country to his brother Rory, who afterwards was created Earl of Tirconnell, thereby extinguishing the name of O'Donnell."

Letters patent bearing date on and between the 19th April and the 20th Feb., granting the king's pardon for rebellion, &c, to the following 484 persons:—

Lady Ellmore, Countess of Desmond, wife of O'Conor Sligo.	9 O'Benaghane.
Owen O'Hart, Bishop of Achonry.	19 O'Beolanes.
11 McCahelleries.	7 O'Birnes.
6 McDermods.	11 O'Connillanes.
7 McDonoghs.	36 O'Connors.
52 McDonnogh.	10 O'Crianes.
12 McDonnells.	16 O'Dowdas.
4 MEwards.	5 O'Fearies.
9 M'Fearbisse or Fearbissa.	7 O'Flanellys.
9 M'Gillepedires.	25 O'Haries.
9 M'Gowans.	54 O'Hartes.
10 M'Manes.	20 O'Higgins or O'Higgins.
7 M'Moilroney Finn.	3 O'Heelys.
25 M'Rorie or M'Roryes.	12 O'Helly or O'Hellies.
9 M'Swines.	5 O'Mowlghies.
30 M'Swinys.	20 O'Scanlanes.
5 M'Fiernanes.	7 O'Thinmans.
6 M'Tomoltoghs.	5 O'Twynanes.

Total pardoned four hundred and eighty-four.



was certainly not, for he scoffed openly at theological disputes, and in his personal conduct and private intercourse was openly irreligious. "Hang thee," said the Earl of Essex to him, in a friendly conversation, "thou talkest of a free exercise of religion—thou carest as much for religion as my horse;" and O'Neill had too much tact to make himself ridiculous by a hypocritical denial. "The day was yet far off when political craft involved the necessity of private dissimulation; but at the same time we must in fairness admit that the rights of conscience may be contested by the most flagitious; and that liberty of religion is a ground on which infidelity itself may take its stand with some degree of sincerity."<sup>1</sup>

It is to be regretted that more abundant and distinct information relative to O'Connor, cannot be found in unquestionable form amongst the casual notices of him which occur. His readiness to submit to English rule, or to rebel against it, according to whichever line of conduct best suited his purpose at the moment, his seeming fickleness, venality, suppleness, and deceit, are in marked contrast to the frank determination of O'Donnell, his patriotic firmness and tenacity of purpose.

Alarmed at the many and rapid desertions from his cause, the great Ulster chief, O'Neill, applied to be received to mercy; his application, at first refused, was afterwards granted on certain conditions, amongst others to renounce the title of the O'Neill, and to use his influence in abolishing ancient Irish laws and customs. How appropriate are the words applied by Ware to the fall of another great man: "All his friends forsook him, none answered for him . . . ; wherein we may behold as in a glass the disposition of feigned friends in former ages, who in the spring of man's felicity, like swallows will fly about him, but when the winter of adversity nippeth, like snails they keep within their shells."

When O'Neill's submission became generally known, all resistance to Saxon rule ceased. The cause is not far to seek. The chiefs had been supreme, restrained by no law; the people, obedient to their will, accepted them as heaven-sent leaders whom no Saxon government dared or could suppress. But now the champions are beaten down and powerless, their weapons

<sup>1</sup> Wills' "Irish Nation," Vol. i., p. 528.



struck from their hands, their followers scattered and cowed, whilst the strong hand of British rule is stretched forth to draw the entire nation, for the first time, within its firm and powerful grasp.

On the oft-repeated and hackneyed theme of the present peasantry of Ireland being representatives of the ancient proprietors, it may be safely asserted that, with very few exceptions, the dispossessed chieftains and the attainted lords of the country had (as noted by Sir B. Burke in his "Vicissitudes of Families") too much spirit and pride to remain passively at home, and to accept the new order of things. It is not in the cabins of Connaught that we are to seek for representatives of any of the chiefs who held high position in the times now under review.

The Irish gentleman of the time of the Tudors was not in the humour, after his cause was lost, to turn his sword into a reaping hook, but offered that sword to one or other amongst the sovereigns of Europe who could provide him with a new field of occupation and adventure. The then contending armies of Europe were only too eager to receive the exiled Irish soldier, who on many a continental battle-field brought lustre to the laurels so sadly dimmed at home. Truly does Borlase remark, "The most lasting houses have their seasons more or less of a certain constitutional strength; they have their spring and summer sunshine glare, their wane, decline, and death."

The combat had been protracted and well sustained, but the adage *An necis longas regibus esse manus* was at length brought home with bitter force to the minds of the Irish chiefs. The Imperial Lioness had indeed long talons. Elizabeth, however, was now dying; she was incapable of receiving any gratification from the fortunate termination of the contest; she expired 24th March, 1603.

"*Habet!*" roared the densely-packed crowds in the old Roman amphitheatre, when, after a well-contested combat, some brave but unsuccessful gladiator went down before the well-directed weapon of his more skilful opponent; and such might have been the exclamation of the British nation at Mountjoy's well-planted blow, for the ancient tribal system of the Celtic population was shivered in pieces.

The ruinous consequences of the dissensions and anarchy by

which the land was harassed during the remote yet important ages brought under review, have now been recorded. The result may be said to have proceeded from the absence of the Roman Eagle; that is to say, from the want of that military conquest by which the habits and policies of other western nations had been revolutionised. The institutions of the ancient Irish closely resembled those which prevailed in the Gallic nations, before Rome poured her legions into their provinces, thereby remodelling the whole framework of society. The customs and habits of the Irish people were utterly incompatible with social progress or national prosperity. The absence of a fixed law of succession formed a fruitful source of dissensions and a powerful incentive to assassinations. The system of land tenure acted injuriously upon the industry of the people, and the administration of justice was regulated by Brehon law.

Now all is changed; the English Leopard must essay to take up the task of the Roman Eagle, with what degree of success remains to be narrated.

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## APPENDIX A.

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### THE LIMESTONE CAVES OF SLIGO,

BY EDWARD J. HARDMAN, H.M.G.S.

MANY are well acquainted, from actual observation or reading, with the caves of America, India, Germany, Belgium, or England, but are, perhaps, not so well informed as to the existence of large and picturesque caves in the Emerald Isle. In the South and central counties are the extensive caverns of Mitchelstown, County Cork; those of Dungarvan, County Waterford, remarkable for the important discoveries in some, of bones of mammoth, bear, reindeer, and other extinct Irish animals—and in others, of stone implements, accompanied by beautifully carved bone and ivory ornaments. The Cave of Dunmore, in Kilkenny, attracts attention, both from its size and from the record of it in the “Annals of the Four Masters.” In the North of Ireland there are the well-known caverns of Cave Hill, which have yielded many traces of pre-historic man; as have also the limestone caves of Fermanagh, which, however, contain implements showing a merging of the Stone and Iron ages.

All these caves occur exclusively in limestone rocks—either the newer, as in the chalk of Cave Hill, or in the older carboniferous limestone, usually known as “mountain limestone”—more especially in the uppermost beds. It might, therefore, be confidently expected that we should meet with many caves in the Sligo district, where the upper limestone is a considerable and important geological formation. The majestic Ben-Bulbin, the rugged valley of Gleniffe, and the beautiful Glenade and Glencar, are carved out of this material; while stretching southwards on both sides of the northern continuation of the Ox mountains, is a low undulating plain of the lower beds of the limestone, rarely rising to any considerable elevation, except at Kesh and Knock-na-Shee, where the uppermost beds again are found.

The limestone being easily dissolved by rain-water, contains numerous cavities and fissures, which, enlarging in the course of time, would develop into caves; and the solitary explorer oftentimes meets with a nature-carving of rare beauty—sometimes a shelter cave; again a gigantic cleft, at one time roofed in, but now broken into and uncovered by “the constant dropping that wears away a stone.” Hardly a brae can be climbed, hardly a valley explored, where such cavities are not met with; and along the coast

they frequently occur, where, although not very imposing in appearance, they are not devoid of beauty and interest.

The more important caves of the limestone district are those of Kesh, Killasnet, at the head of Glencar Valley, and Gleniffe, on the north side of Ben-Bulbin, near Ballintrillick.

Kesh Caves lie to the south-east of Ballymote, and half-way up the mountain. A pleasant drive of half an hour from the town brings one to the foot of the hill, and a steep ascent of about 500 feet leads to a perpendicular face of rock, which presents no bad resemblance to the side of some ancient fortification, time-worn and encrusted with ivy. This rock rises some sixty feet high, and in it are numerous openings, most of which resemble Gothic archways. The caves are about 800 feet above sea-level, and occur a little above the junction of the middle or "calp" limestone, and the "upper" limestone.

None of them are particularly large, the most important being the Hermit's Bedroom, a large cavity at least twenty feet high, having a small chamber to the left, and a passage immediately opposite to the entrance. To this lugubrious retreat a Timon of the neighbourhood retired some years ago, and lived in solitude for some time; but during a heavy snow storm, being unable to receive succour or to escape from his self-imposed prison, he perished miserably of cold and hunger. Such is the story told.

Some of these cavities are worthy of examination. In one the rock has been scooped out so as to resemble a set of Norman arches. In another, a little to the right of this, one can penetrate for a considerable distance a low passage of Gothic form, leading to a stalagmitic shrine at the extremity. The effect produced here by the magnesium light is very picturesque.

There are many small lateral passages, but being very low it is impossible to explore them for any distance. Fine dry weather should be chosen by those visiting these caves, for the clayey deposit forming the floor is not a pleasant substance to crawl over in damp weather.

Delicate and beautiful ferns and lichens adorn these caverns. An enormous and ferocious species of spider inhabits the chambers. Six, carried home in a match-box, diminished in numbers to two, and the survivors, who had greatly increased in bulk after their cannibalistic orgie, tried to chew a pen-handle used to stir them up. They also made a savage attack on a finger presented to their notice. They seem as ferocious as the Nevada tarantulas of Mark Twain.

On the whole, the caves of Kesh will well repay a visit; and the view from the summit of the mountain is, on a fine day, worth seeing, affording glimpses of some of the most picturesque parts of Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, and Mayo, the fair plains of Boyle, the placid waters of Lough Arrow and Lough Key, and the edge of the far-spreading Atlantic—

"... ποντίων τε κυμάτων  
'Ανήριθμον γέλασμα." \*

\* Æsch. Prom. Vinet.



Gleniffe Caves are the finest in the whole district. They occur near the summit of the northern edge of the Ben-Bulbin range, overshadowing the deep valley of Gleniffe, and are only reached after a toilsome climb of over 1,200 feet up a very steep grassy slope, followed by a *tulus* of loose stones; then comes a precipitous face of rock some forty feet high, difficult to scale, except by the naked foot of the native guide. Overcoming this difficulty, and that of a highly-inclined steep above, the toiler reaches the entrance, an immense natural arch about thirty or forty feet high, and fully sixty feet wide. The opening cavern is large, but of no great beauty; and the candles—of which a good supply should be taken—being lit, the exploration may be commenced. An opening to left leads into a vast chamber, which we may call the drawing-room. It would be impossible to estimate the size of this great cavity, but sometimes a light flashed through the gloom on a piece of rock fully fifty feet above our heads; and still higher were deeper depths of shade, indicating further recesses. The extent of the chamber must be very great, but the accumulation of immense blocks of fallen rock from the roof rendered it quite out of the question to make a thorough exploration, unless more than one day be given to the task. These blocks suggest an uncomfortable possibility. What if a piece of roof, weighing some twenty tons or so, should become detached and form the tombstone of the explorer? A pleasant thought, but the chance is far from remote. As the lights flit around, great depths and abysses are revealed, stalactites hung like petrified bunches of grapes from the roof, and the walls and overhanging ledges exhibit stone "icicles" and massive coatings of stalagmite in every fantastic form that nature can devise. To the right is a narrow but lofty chamber, the square and solidly-cut walls of which give the idea of an ancient castle keep. Presently the cave contracts and lowers, and the Gothic gallery is entered, nature simulating very effectively. Close to the entrance is a curious formation of stalagmite, resembling an old-fashioned farm-house chimney, or "ingle-nook," of huge dimensions, at one side of which is a colossal female figure. This being robed, might be considered a *Caryatides*, but was by acclamation voted to be Lot's wife. Further on, the gallery of Gothic arches became very narrow, and in places very difficult of passage, and somewhat precipitous. It leads us again into the entrance-hall.

We now make for the "Gravel Walk," a fine Gothic gallery, with a beautifully smooth gravelled pathway, some eight feet wide. This passage, which is about 100 feet long, leads from the left of the entrance arch, and winding around for some distance, opens out finally on the face of the cliff, affording a magnificent view of the country to the north-east and east, including Bundoran and the great cliffs of the Donegal coast. Some little distance from the opening, a "Crumpawn," or steeple-shaped pinnacle, rears itself in solitary grandeur. The guide informed us that some time before, a young lady of the County Sligo scaled this rock, and perched herself on the summit. The position had apparently no charms for any of our party. The artist of the party required a figure in that precise part of the foreground, but an immediate interest in the interior of the cave seemed to



be developed by the suggestion. This pinnacle exalts itself over a precipice of about 200 feet, and offers about two feet of solid standing-ground.

The descent is somewhat more rapid than the ascent; in some places, perhaps, inconveniently more so. Those who, like Dr. Johnson, prefer to travel fast, might find a toboggan useful, and might also discover the practical meaning of "accelerating velocity." This process would occupy about five minutes, but those who are not in a particular hurry can conveniently accomplish the journey in about twenty minutes.

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## APPENDIX B.

### CHANCERY INQUISITIONS.

ELIZABETH.

(*Very much obliterated.*)

No. 1.

(*Names of Jurors.*)

Johannes Creygan de Sligagh.  
Willm fitz Creygan de eadem.  
Phelim O'Hart de Ardtermon.  
Owinus O'Connor de (            ).  
Donaldus (            ) O'Hart de Sligagh.  
Dowaltagh McSwyne de Longforde.  
Ferrall McDonoghe de (            ) ulloyne.  
Walterus Cra (            ).  
Donaldus (            ) de Lergusse (?).  
(            ) de Downalli.  
Donatius (            ).  
Barnardus O'Harte (            ).  
Albanus McSwyne de Longford.

Qui juratores dicunt qd Donaldus O'Connor miles vulgrit vocat O'Connor Sligagh octavo die novembris . . . . .  
sui de O'Connor de Sligagh (            ) castri (            ) terris (            )  
dominia (            ) comoditat (            ) ptinentiis (            ) pdictus  
Donaldus O'Connor miles (            ) dnmco suo ut de feodo vel Jure  
(            ) pdicti (            ) p lres patentis indentat sub magno sigillo  
&c. &c. dei Donaldus O'Connor (            ) Item dicunt qd praedictus  
Donaldus O'Connor als Occonnor Sligagh tempore sursum redditiones  
(            ) viz octavo die Novembris (            ) fuit seisit in Dnmco  
suo ut de feodo de patria sive terris vulgariter vocat Carberie in comitat  
Sligagh ut de castris sive Porteryiis (            ) et villas villat sive Hamlet  
cum eorum ptinend (            ) deo patria (            ) carbrie subnominat  
viz de castro et villa de Sligagh, de castro et villa de Bundro(ose), de castro  
et villa de Grangy, de castro et villa de Bradcullen, de castro et villa de



Conote ( ) de castro et villa de Ardtermon, de castro et villa de (Lis)endell, de castro et villa de Clondarra, de castro et villa de Downally, de castro et villa de Donelyan, de castro et villa de Ballenheire, de castro et villa de Scardan, de castro et villa de Deleirus, de castro et villa de Bealadroict, unacum ( ) et trigind quarteriis terre tam arrabit quate prate ( ), pastur mori turbarrii, boski, subboski, et cum eorum ptinentiis ( ) villis et ( ) separatre prænominat ( ) ( ) quod pdict patria sive, territoria de Carberie cum oibus castris, villis et uno et triginti quarterii terre supradict quod valent p annum ultra reprisal decem libr. sex sold et ( ) dona monete Hibernie.

Item dicunt qd praedid Donald O'Connor Sligagh ( ) seisit tempore sursu redditionis predictae nempe octavo die novembris &c. &c., de patria sive territorio vulgar. vocat Tyreeraygia in comitat. Sligagh pdict. ut de castris sive ( ) et vill, villat, sive Hamlet cum eorum ptinentiis infra dic patria de Tyreeraygia subnominat viz.:—de castro et villa de castro-Connor, de castro et villa de Ballicottell, de castro et villa de Impgrevin (?), de castro et villa de Kylglasse, de castro et villa de Lecan, de castro et villa de ( ) de castro et villa de Rathliew de castro et villa de (I)mlyagishell, de castro et villa de Carrowenkodde, de castro et villa de Ros( ), de castro et villa de Downenthin, de castro et villa de Downeylie, de castro et villa de Downehentrahan, de castro et villa de Downemikane, de castro et villa de Downe ( ), de castro et villa de Ardglasse, de castro et villa de Bonyiane, de castro et villa de Carron-in-Coysill, de castro et villa de Longfort, de castro et villa de Tonregoe, de castro et villa de Ballingowan una cum triginta quatuor quarteriis terre tam arabilis quam, &c. &c.

Et dicunt quod pdicta patria de Tyreeragh cu oibus, &c. &c. &c.

Item dicunt qd pdictus Donaldus O'Connor de Sligagh fuit ( ) seisit . . . . . patriis sive territoriis vulgarit vocat the Laynes in comitat Sligagh ( ) de castro et villa de ( ) onolanye, de castro et villa de Moyinlag( ), de castro et villa de Carro( ) crewe una . . . . . infra patria sive territoria de Layin araboye et etiam de Lanynyeaiarto (?) et de castro ac villa de Bealaclere, de castro et villa de Carr( ), de castro et villa de Tullaghneglog ac de castro et villa de Bealanefe ( ) una cu viginti quarteriis terre tam, &c.

Et Ulterius dicunt qd pdict Donaldus O'Connor als O'Connor de Sligagh . . . . . fuit seit ut de feodo de patria sive territoria vocat Tyeyryll in comitat Sligagh de castro et villa de ( ) de castro et villa de Bricklew, de castro et villa de Calen, de castro et villa de Castleloghdergayne, de castro et villa de Tullenemoyle, de castro et villa de Coolonney ac de castro et villa de Knockinmallen . . . . .

Et Insuper dicunt qd Donaldus O'Connor . . . . . fuit seisit in dmneo suo ut de feodo in et de patria sive territoria vocat Coren in comitat Sligagh . . . . .

(The rest very illegible.).



(*Extract from Inquisition No. 2, Elizabeth.*)

Inquisitio capta apud Sligagh duodecimo die Augusti anno regni dñne regine Elizabethe . . . . .

Georgius Godman de Teatemple.  
 O'Mulloy de Ardcullen.  
 Teo(ghe) O'Dowde de Eskerowen.  
 (Morish Reagh) McDonogh de Clounemaly.  
 Richardus O'Dogher(tie) de Eskerowen.  
 Callagh O'Connor de Grange.  
 (Hu)gh McDonogh de Ballyonaghan.  
 Dermot McDonogh de (Tullemohy).  
 Molmory O'Donell de Rosselley.  
 Shane O'Connor McFarganany de Scardane.  
 Dowaltagh Roe McSwyne de Longf(orde).  
 Cormock McDonogh de (Lisleale).  
 Allen Albanagh de Ra(liewer).  
 Brian Oge O'Higgin de (Curryvane).  
 Enreas O'Connor McParson de Dromca(            ).  
 Willm Tafe de (Bonomdane).

Donaldus O'Connor nup de Sligagh miles obiit apud villam de Sligagh ultimo die Decembris 1587 et Item dicunt quod pdic Donaldus O'Connor die in quo obiit fuit seit in dmneo et tenemt suo, viz.—de manerio, castro et villa de Sligagh als Slygo . . . . . cureronis ac dimid cartron terre omis generis cum suis ptinentiis in Barronia de Carbry in comitat pdict, viz.—de una quarteria terre vocat Carowm'Donany de una quarter terre vocat . . . . . continen in se quatuor qu ternis terre, de una p celia terre vocat Lishodyll continen quinque cartr terre de una quteria vocat Ardtermon, de dimid quter terre vocat D(        )ylbin . . . . . vocat Lyshenlorge, de una quarteria terre vocat R(at)hlinne de una quarteria terre vocat Clancarbry, de una quarteria terre vocat Fynesyllyn de dimid quarter terre vocat Nemdodo (?) de dimid . . . . . quarter terre vocat Ardneglasse, de una qd terre vocat Mony(        )olee, de dimid quarter terre vocat Slygune, de una cartron terre in Rynne (        ) de dimid quarter vocat Cooletory de ( . . . . . ) de dimid quarter terre vocat Cassell(        ) de una cart terre vocat Clonolcoe, de una cartron terre vocat Castellgouine (?) de una quarteria terre vocat (        ) . . . . . vocat Rohirry, de una quarteria terre vocat (        ) de dimid quarter Cloughes(        ) . . . . . de dimid quarter vocat Knockan, de dimid quarter terre vocat Ballymellyn . . . . . Dromfadda ac de una cartrona terre vocat Cloghsinary.

Et dicunt pdictus Donaldus O'Connor fuit seisisus p termino vite sive . . . . . de castro . . . . . de Leyny in isto com Sligagh . . . . .

Insuper dicunt qd pdictus Donaldus O'Connor fuit seisisus de . . . .  
 quarteriis in Barronia de Carbrie, que olim fuerunt terre stirpitis Mouer-  
 tagh O'Connor, Stirpitis . . . . O'Connor ac de Onyrin Moyenny  
 . . . . .

*(The remainder of the document is too faint to be read).*

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No. 3.

Inquisitio capta apud Sligagh duodecimo die Augusti Anno regni Dne  
 Regine Elizabethe trecesimo ( ) per sacrament p hominum quorum  
 nomina subsequuntur.

Georgius Godman de Teatemple.  
 Owny O'Mulloy de Ardcullen.  
 Teoghe O'Dowde de Eskerowen.  
 Morish Reogh McDonogh de Clounemahy.  
 Richardus O'Doghertie de Eskerowen,  
 Callagh O'Connor de Grange.  
 Enrease O'Connor MePson de Dromerclere.  
 Hugh McDonogh de Ballyonoghan.  
 Dermot McDonogh de Tullemoly.  
 Mulmory McDonnell de Rosseley.  
 Shane O'Connor McFarganany de Skardan.  
 Cormock McDonoghe de Lisleah.  
 Allen Albanagh de Raliewer.  
 Wm Tafe de Bonomdane.  
 Briane Oge O'Higgin de Curryvane.

Qui dicunt quod Donaldus O'Connor miles obiit apud villam de Sligagh  
 ultimo die Decembris, 1587, quod Pdictus Donaldus die, quo obiit seit fuit  
 ut de libero tenement suo pro termend vite sue remanere ( ) here-  
 dibus masculis Pdiecte Taddei als Teige O'Connor procreat et heredibus  
 masculis de eorum corporib procreand de castris, &c., de Slygagh als Slygoe  
 ac de viginti quart quarteriis terre cum tribus cartronis ac dimid cartron in  
 Barronnia de Carbry in comitat pdict viz., de una quarter terre vocat  
 Carow McDowany, de una qr terre vocat ( ) de villa de Brad-  
 cullen, de una pcell terre vocat Lissidyll, de una qr terre vocat Ardtermon,  
 de dimid qr voc ( ) de dimid quarter terre vocat Raghley, de una  
 qr terre vocat Lyshenlorge, de una qr terre vocat Rahaberne de una qr  
 terre vocat Cluncarbry, de una qr terre vocat Fynesflyn, de dimid qr terre  
 vocat ( ) de dimid qr terre vocat Ly ( ) de una qr terre  
 vocat Ardneglasse, de una qr terre vocat Monygold, de dimid qr terre  
 vocat Slygane de una cartrona terre in Rymiroge, de dimid qr terre vocat  
 Cooletory, de una qr terre vocat Monynanemy, de dimid cart terre vocat  
 Castellgarrane, de una qr terre vocat Clonolcoe, de una carte terre vocat  
 Castellgowne, de una quarter terre vocat Ard ( ) assyn de una qr



terre vocat Corry Conbe ( ) de dimid qr terre vocat Rahirry, de una quar terre vocat Lebally, de dimid qr terre vocat Cloughcoe, de dimid quarter vocat Kilmackane, de dimid cart terre de Lysneclonoe, de dimid qr terre de Kilcada, de una qr terra vocat Clynonny, de dimid qr terre vocat Edonroigh, de dimid qr terre vocat Knockane, de dimid qr terre vocat Ballymollyn, de dimid qr terre vocat Erungriogh, de dimid qr terre vocat Dromfada, ac de una cart terre vocat Cloghsimary . . . . .

Insuper dicunt quod pdictus Donaldus O'Connor miles die quo obiit fuit etiam seisisus pro termino vite sue, &c. &c. exeunte de xxxiii (?) quarteriis terre in Barronia de Carbreay qui olim fuerunt terre stirpitis Moner-tagh (O'Connor) Stirpitis Bernardus O'Connor ac Stirpitis Turentii O'Connor ac de Onyrin Moyenny.

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#### INQ. 4.

Inquisitio capta apud villam de Sligo in comitat Sligo, septimo die Octobris Annis Dnie 1587, et regne Dne nre Elizabethe, &c. coram Johane Crofton Ad per sacramentu pbond homin comitat Sligo quorum nomina subsequunt.

Walterus O'Crean de Sligo  
 Roricus O'Hart de Artermon  
 Jacobus McSwyne de Donoghentrany  
 Alanus Albanagh de Ralee  
 Barnardus O'Dowde de Iskerown  
 Malachias McDonogh de Cooloony  
 Barnardus McSwyne de Ardneglasse  
 Donaldus O'Crean de Slygo  
 Patritius O'Hart de Bradcullen  
 Andreas O'Connor de Dromclewe  
 Hubert Albanagh de Ralee  
 Malachias McDonogh de Ballendowan

Qui dicunt *qd cu p divsa* statuta in hoc regno Hiberne edita et confirmata plane patet et apparet quod omnes abbatie, monasteria ac domus Religiosus cu suis jurib terris tenementis ac decimis cu eorum pertinentiis de jure spectant ac ptinent ad dnam mam Elizabethem nuc reginam ut anexe corone hujus regni sui Hibnie pdict.

Est quedam capella vocat Alterenan in Baronia de Tyreragh in isto comitat Sligo pcell possessionu nup Abbatie sive monasterii de Knokmooy in Imany in comitat Gallway cu una quarteria terre omnis genis cu suis ptinentiis diet capella spectant que valent, &c.



## INQ. 5.

Inquisitio capta apud Sligagh in comitat Sligagh quarto die Marcii Anno Regni Regni Elizabeth tricesimo coram Thoma Epo Mid. Robert Dillon milites, &c. Ad inquirend per sacramentu pbor homin comitat Sligo per quod rei veritas melius scire poterit quantum terras, tenementos, et hereditamentos Donaldus O'Connor miles ten. de eadem dna Regina, &c. Et quis propinqu heres masculus de copore pdicti Thadei O'Connor sit. Et cujus etatis et si sit maritatus.

Phелеmei O'Connor de Skardane  
 Donogh McConnor O'Harte de Ardtermon  
 Owiny McGila Duffe de Clonedeirane  
 Pricii McNeile O'Harte de Bradkillen  
 Hugoms McGille Duffe de ( )  
 Brian McSwyne de Arneglasse  
 Brian O'Dowde de Iniskrowen  
 ( ) Albanagh de Ralee  
 Owen McDermott de Ballyane  
 Con McLyngh de Brycklieve  
 Melaghlane McMulrony de Corrlevin  
 Manes Riagh McTumulty de Rathmollyn  
 Erryl O'Gare de Moygarie  
 Rory ballagh O'Hart de Ardtermon  
 Ferrall M'Dowalty de Tullenemoyle

Qui dicunt quod quedam compositio et agreament ex parte Dne Regine fact fuit inter Honorabilem Johannem Perrit militern Dnm Deputat general hujus regni Hibnie ex una parte, et principal heres et inhabitants com de Sligagh altera parte, pro terris tentis et hereditamentis suis infra com Sligagh. De quibus pnotatis partibus et person pdictus Donaldus O'Connor fuit unus principalm hom infra com pdic . . . . .

The said Right Honble the Lord Deputie for and in behalf of the Queenes most excellent majestie and also the chieftains gentlemen & Freeholders on the behalf of themselves & the reste of the inhabitants of the County of Sligoe doth promise, grant and agree to and with the said Sir Donill O'Connor that whereas the Barony of Carbry containeth 150 quarters of land whereof belongeth to the Queenes majestie xiiii quarters and a half and to the Bishopric of Elphin ix quarters and a half and so remaineth 126 quarters. The said Sir Donill in respect of his Loyalty and faithfulness to the Crown of England shall have receive and take by lrs patents from the Queenes most excellent majestie to him and the heirs males of the body of his father for the better supportacion & maintenance as well of this his present as also . . . . . ( ) agree with title of honor it shall please her highness to call him, the castles and manors of Sligo in the Barony of Carbry and Moyemlagh in the Barony of Maghereleyny and all the lands &c., appertaining as

well to the name & calling of O'Connor Sligo as also belonging or appertaining Sleight owin O'Connor from whom the said Sir Donill is said to descend or appertaining to the said Sir (Donill) or otherwise in said Baronies of Carbury & Maghereleyny accounted to be in the whole 32 quarters as a demesne to his castles & manors freely discharged from this composition. And shall hold & enjoy to him & the heirs males of the body of his father as one yearly rent charge of 13<sup>s</sup> 4<sup>d</sup> going out of the quarter of the residue of the said quarter ( ) iiii. xiiii quarters of lands of Sleight Mouertagh Sleight Brien & Sleight Tirlagh O'Connor. And those of Cororeny Moygenny by the year to xiii. ii<sup>n</sup> xiii<sup>s</sup> iiii<sup>d</sup> ster. full recompense of all such rents &c customary spending by him claimed upon the said Cowrine and Sleight not charging the portion of the land upon the inhabitants & that they and every of them, their heirs & assigns according to his and their portions of land shall hold the same of the said Sir Donnill O'Connor and the heirs males of his father . . . . .

And whereas the Barony of Tyreragh containeth clxv quarters & a half whereof belongeth to the Queen ix quarters and to the Bishopric of Killaloe as is said ii quarters and a half and so remaineth. c. l. iiii qrs. It is likewise granted & agreed that the said Sir Donill & the heirs males of the body of his father shall have and enjoy one yearly rent charge of viii<sup>s</sup> ster going out of every quarter of the aforesaid residue of cliiii quarters amounting by the year to lxi<sup>s</sup> xii<sup>s</sup> in full recompense of all such rents, &c. . . . .

And whereas the halfe Barony of Cowlooynn containeth xx quarters of Land it is likewise granted and agreed that the said Sir Donnill Oconnor shall have & enjoy to him & the heirs males of his father one yearly rent charge of Tenn shill. ster. going out of every quarter of the aforesaid xx quarters Amounting by the year to x<sup>n</sup> ster. in full recompense of all such duties &c. . . . .

And whereas the barony of Maghereleyny containeth c. c. v quarters and a half of land whereof belongeth to the Queen xxviii quarters and to the Bishoprick of Aghconry xxxii quarters.

It is likewise granted & agreed that the said Sir Donill Oconnor and the heirs males of the body of his father as aforesaid shall have & enjoy one yearly rent-charge of vii<sup>s</sup> x<sup>d</sup> going out of qr. of the aforesaid residue Amounting by the year to liii<sup>n</sup> viii<sup>s</sup> iiii<sup>d</sup>, &c. . . . .

And whereas the Barony of Tyreryll containeth c. c. v quarters whereof belongeth to the Queen xxi quarters and a half to the of Treanne and Elphin xxii quarters.

It is likewise granted and agreed that the said Sir Donill Oconnor and the heirs males of the body of his father shall have, hold and enjoy one yearly rent-charge of vi<sup>s</sup> vi<sup>d</sup> ster. out of every quarter of the aforesaid residue amounting by the year to liii<sup>n</sup> xi<sup>s</sup> x<sup>d</sup>.

And whereas the barony of Corren containeth c.lviiii quarters whereof



belongeth it to the Queen ( ) quarters and to the Bishopric of Aghconry viiii quarters. It is likewise granted and agreed that the said Sir Donill Oconnor shall have, hold and enjoy to him and the heires males of the body of his father one yearly rent-charge of ix<sup>s</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> ster. going out of every quarter of the aforesaid Residue Amounting by the year to liii<sup>s</sup> xii<sup>s</sup> xi<sup>d</sup> in full recompense &c.

Et Ulterius jurat dicunt quod pdict Donaldus Oconnor, miles, virtute composit paid fuit seisitus ad termind vite sue de annuali redditu, remanere inde ut supra pred ana Regina per bras suas patent sub magno sigillo Hibnie &c &c.

Dedit et concessit praefad Donald Oconnor als Oconnor Sligagh omnia et singula castra, vill, villat, hamlet, pcell ten, qr. ten, Redded &c &c.

Cum eorum ptinentiis appenden in manner &c de Sligagh, Bundiris, Grange, Brodercillane, Courte, Ardtermon, Lyssendall, Clondarra, Downally, Formoyle, Donylyan, Ballynhaire, Scardane, Leyrus, Bealadr(ihid), Castleconnor, Ballycottell, Inyshretyn, Kilglash, Lecan, Leawhyne, Pollencheine, Rathlyewe, Imlaghyshell, Carrowenrodde, Rosseley . . . Downeley, Downechentrahim, Downemekyn, . . . Downelaynne, Ardglasse, Bonyne, Carron, Longeforte, Tonregoe, Ballyhoan, Laynarboy, Tullaghagh, Cowlanye, Monilagh, Carrownecrewe, Ley Lanyerareough, Bealachee, Carrowcurragh, Tullagheneyloge et Bralanefermoy, Ballendryne, Brecklewe, Colen, Castleloughdergyne, Tullanemoyle, Colonney, Knockinvallen, Buniniddan, Rathmullen, Clonemahon, Behee, Ardnerie, in com Sligo de habend et tenend omnia et singula pmiss eidm Donald pro termino vitae suae remanere inde heredibus masculis Thadei O'Connor pris Donald O'Connor pdit &c &c.

Et Juratores dicunt quod Donaldus O'Connor pdic die quo obiit fuit seisitus de quarteriis vocat fin(isk)lin, quarteriis vocet Farren McEdowony et quarteriis vocat Ballyherna. Ac etiam de de castro et villa de Bradcullen in com de Sligo ac de castro et villa de Ardtermon, ac de castro et Lissendall ac de castro et villa de Denelyne ac de castro et villa de Ballynecharry.

Et insupra de quadam pcell terr ac villat vel hamlet que vulgariter vocat quarter de Ragly de pcell terr vocat Ardtrasny de pcell terr vocat Le duo quarter de Leavally de pcell terr vocat quarter de Kilm'anna de pcell terr vocat quarter de Emby, de pcell terr vocat dimid quarter de Monettene, de pcell terr vocat dimid quarter de Rahere, de pcell terr vocat quarter de Le Glan de pcell terr vulgariter vocat quarter de Leavally de Slevghowin et Garryowin de pcell terr vocat quarter de Ardneglasse de pcell terr vocat quarter de Lecarrownemaddy de pcell terr vocat quarter de Lyle, de dimid quarter de Calken, de dimid quarter de ( )chaddy de dimid quarter de Kadanryagh, de dimid quarter de Dromfaddy, de quarter de Clofwony, de quarter de Carnughmony, de quarter de Sl( )ght.

Ac etiam dicunt quod pdit Donald obiit ultimo die Decembris . . .



et quod Thadeus O'Connor pater pdic Donald habuit exitu mascul de corpore suo legitime procreat Cale O'Connor primo genito fil et hered et quod pdic Cale habuit exitu mascul de corpore suo legitime procreat Donogh O'Connor genitu fil et hered.

Et dicunt quod idem Donogh est propinq heres mascul de corpore pdic Thadei O'Connor legitime procreat et quod tam pdic Thadeus pater dicti Donald milit quam praedic Cale pater praedicti Donogh . . . .

Et quod Idem Donogh tempore mortis pdic Donald O'Connor milit fuit de ætate viginti unius annorum novem mensu et non maritat.

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## APPENDIX C.

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### [EXCHEQUER INQUISITIONS, SLIGO.]

Inquisitionum  
Captarum apud comitatum Sligo  
Numero 14 —  
tempore Regni Elizabeth Regine  
inter annos 1504 & 1593 utrisque inclusis  
Repertorium.

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#### Inq. 1.

Inq°. capta apud villam de Slygo 27° Martii 1584, coram Johane Crofton  
p Sacramentu pboy & legalium hominum, &c.

Rich Doherty de Ballymote  
Melaghlin McDonogh de Ballindown  
Cahall McDye de Aghanagh  
Morris McDonogh de Clonmahyn  
Jac O'Crean de Slygo  
Manus Reogh de Lyssecunne  
Tomult O'Skanlan de Portynch  
Teig Dall O'Higgin de Doughome  
Melaghlin McDonogh de Coloony  
Bryan McMulrony de Grangemore  
Ennes McMy de Kyllen,  
Mulumry O'Dugenan de Shencho  
Ferfessa O'Dugenan de Shenco  
Walter Crean de Slygo  
Phelym O'Connor de Scardan  
Johannus O'Crean de Slygo

qui dicunt quod cu p divsa Statuta plane patit quod omes abbatie ac  
domus Religiosom, cu eoy, cu suis Juribz tenis ac decimis de Jure spectant  
ad Regina ut anexi corone Regni Hibernie ——— Est quidam Cella Prioratus  
sive domus Canonicon vulgarit dict The Priory of Acheras als Kylmultyn  
in barronia de Tyreeragh in Comitatu Sligo, que ptinet ad Reginam ratione



statutoy pdict, que p. longu tempus vastat jacuit ratione querre, et quasi concelat a Regina sed nuo est in occupacone Eugenii Oconnor Clerici — quod Priorat pdict continet in se 1 Eccliam ruinosam cu Campanile in fine dce Eccle, nuc in forma castru edificatu cu 1 qr adjacent — quod Viccaria Eccie de Dromyrd in barronia de Tyreeragh spectat ad priorat pdict Et quod viccaria Eccle de Kylm'selgan in eadem patria spectat etiam ad priorat pdict et val p ann ultra stipent in curat 3<sup>s</sup> 6<sup>d</sup> monete hibnie.

Quod viccaria de Conagh in barronia pdic ptinet quoque ad pdic Priorat — et quod viccaria de Eccle de Aghumlys in barronia de Carbria, cu 1 qr. terr ut Gleba det viccarie, ac 1 parva Insula ibi in alta mare spectant ad dicam priorat, que valet p ann ultra stipendiu Curati 15<sup>s</sup> current monete Hibnie.

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#### INQ. 2.

Inq°. capta apud villam de Slygo 17<sup>o</sup> Martii 1584 coram Johane Crofton p sacramentu pboy, Richard Dogherty de Ballymoate, Melaghlin McDonogh de Ballydowne, Bryan McSwyne de Ardneglasse, Johannes O'Crean de Slygo, Walter O'Crean de Slygo, Eannes McNeny de Kyllen, Ferfessa ODowgenan de Shenco, Melaghlin McDonogh de Coolony, Bryan McMulrony of Coolevin, Shane McFerganainn de Scardan, Enreas OConnor de derrynicleive, Teige OHarte de Grandge, Con McHugh de Brickleive, James O'Crean de Slygo, Bryan O'Goan de Tawnagh, qui dicunt quod ubi p divso statuta patet quod omes abbacie et Monasteria cum suis terris decimis ptinent ad Reginam, et sic inter alia domus Canonicon seti Trinitatis in Logh Kee in Comitatu Roscommon.

Est 1 parva qr. cum suis decimis voc Tulloghmoylebegge in territorie Tyrerill in Com Sligo, pcell possessione domus Canonicon pdic et sic spectans ad Reginam in jure corone sue — que quidem qr. cu decimis et ptin dicunt ppter querram p longu tempus vastet Jacuisse et a Regina prsus incognit fuisse.

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#### INQ. 3.

Inq°. capta apud Slygaghe 17<sup>o</sup> Martii 1584 coram Johanne Crofton p sacramentu pboy, Richardus Doherty de Ballymoate, Bryan McMulrony de Grangemore, Johannes O'Crean de Slygagh, Jacobus O'Crean de Slygagh, Walterus O'Crean de Slygagh, Malachias McDonogh de Ballendowne, Cahall McDiere de Aghanagh, Manus McConnor Oge de Ballendowne, Mauritius McDonogh de Clonimahin, Mulmurry ODowgenan de Shancoghe, Ferfasse ODowgenan de eadem, Teig Dall Olliggin de Dowhone, Tumulto Oge OSkanelon de Portinch. Owen OSkanelan de Radowne, qui dicunt quod cu



p divsa statuta patet quod omnes abbacie et domus Religioso, cu co terr et decimis de jure spectant ad Regina — Est quedam domus patrin Mendicato ordinis sci Dominici, juxta Ballendowne in barronia Tyrerill, continent in se 1 Ecceliam cu cimterio ac  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr pve mesure cu suis decimis — Quod est quoque queda alia Capella sive Cellula minosa egusdem ordinis sci Dominici voc Clonyneaghan in barronia de Corren cum 1 qr Konyvoqe cu suis decimis, que de jure dicunt spectare ad Regina ratione Statuto pdic st quod p longu tempus ppter querram in cult Jacuisse et prsus conclat a Regina.

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INQ. 4.

Inq<sup>o</sup>. capta apud vilam de Sligo 17<sup>o</sup> Martii 1584, coram Johane Crofton p sacramentu pbo (the several Jurors names in last inquisition occur also in this, with the exception of Bryan McMulrony, together with), Manus Reogh McDonogh de Rathmullin, Ferall Kewghe Omenaghan de ead; Manus Reogh McTeig Boy de Lesscan, Jac McSwyne de Downcaffé, Barnardus Marianus de Grangemore, Phelim OConnor de Scardan.

Qui dicunt quod Castrum et Manneriu de Ballymote als Ballycle in pria vocat Carende Jure spectat ad Regina Hibnie — et quod pdic Castru fuit p multos annos in manibus sterpitis de Lez McDonoghs, sed quo Jure Juratorib latet; qd McDonoghe qui fuit principalis sui cognominis tenoit pdic castru ut caput ac suprema locu totius patrie de Corren — quod Patria de Corren existens totaliter devisa inter lez McDonoghes quedam ten fuerunt libere ab omnibus onerib patrie et annexe castro ad sustintacoem dic Castri relique, ten p solvebant censu sive annuale redditu Dno Castri et portabant omia onera ordinaria et extraordinaria patrie pout sequit noia ten que semper fuerunt libere viz. villa de Rathdowne contin in se 4 qr, nue in occupacoe Euginii Oskallon, Leighballye Ne Nanti 2 qr, nue in tenura Baranedi Garrewe, 1 qr, vocat Corhubber in possessione Alexandri McSwyne — Tertia pars ville sive 4 qr terr, Rosselean, in occupacoe Willnie ODumer,  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr Carrowcala in occupacoe Georgei Goodman Constabular Castri de Ballymote — 1 qr Rahynekylyge nuc cu eadem —  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr vocat Clonyne in tenura Taddei OSkallon, 1 qr Dorrowne in possessione filio Teddei Scabidi —  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr Gobbedill in occupacoe Eugenii McTege Carraghe,  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr voc Ardconnell in tenura Eugenii Tullagee, villa de Lochervore als Knockglasse contin in se 4 qr nuc in occupacoe de McDonoghe sui cognominis principalis — sic numerus qr que fuerunt libere sunt 16 qr cu  $\frac{1}{2}$  pte qr — Nomina terrar de Corren, viz ex villa de Ballynespurre que continet in se 4 qr & est in tenura Irwini McSwyne — ex villa de Roseribbe 4 qr in occupacoe Cahall Menrouge et alio, ex semi-villata voc Ardeneglasse 2 qr que nuc inculta Jacet, ex 1 qr Lyssnanaghe in tenura Rogeri et Eugenii Ballaghe ex 1 qr Keenaghan in occupatione Thome Omochan, ex 1 alia qr de Rahynkylyge in tenura Hugonis Nigry, ex qr de

Imleynaghten in occupatione Eugenii ceci OSkanlon, ex qr vocat Carrowe Reoghe in tenuta Taddei Reoghe, ex qr que vocat Knocke in possessione Edmundi Reoghe, ex 1 qr Corron Ry pcell villa de Portinchye, Ex 3 alies qr de Portinchye in tenuta Taddei Juvenis OSkanlon, ex istis 3 villis viz Rathmullyn 4 qr in occupacoe Manus Rioghe, Ballyonaghan 4 qr in possessione Hugonis McDermot ac Loghna vanaghe als Ballygolan 4 qr, in occupacoe Alexandri et Eugenii McSwyne, ex qr voc Shencargen pcell ville de Ballynecloghe in occupacoe Tomulti Juvenis OSkanlon, ex qr Knockymerghir pcell ejusd ville in tenuta Irwinii McSwyne — Summa tam redditus qm qr que p solvebant censu Dno McDonoghe — viz 34 qr terr, census vero suma est £5 3 4 — nomina terra infra patriam de Tyrreryll que fuerunt mutat inter McDonnoghe de Carren et McDonoghe de Tyrreryll p terris in le Corren, in quibus terris de Tyrreryll idem McDonoghe sublevabat annale redall p sequit viz ex qr voc Knockyoremaghy ex qr de Downe Alla, ex qr de Clonyne, ex qr de Knowkrownen qr de Knockbane, ex qr de Kilvoger, ex qr de Cleever, ex qr Carowhely, ex 1 villa que est divisa in 3 partibz viz Trynecarig Trynecowlibeg et Tryne Tawnaghmore 4 qr nuc in possessione Dowaltei Omanaghan ex villa de Beu 4 qr nuc in tenuta Eugenii McDonoghe — summa qr 13, summa reddit ex qr £4 10 ster —

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INQ. 5.

Inq°: capta apud Monasterium de . . . . 28: ° ( ) anno regni Regine 27°: coram Johane Crofton p sacramentu pbo

*(Names of Jurors nearly totally obliterated.)*

Qui dicunt quod Donaldus O Hary fuit Attinctus de Alta p dicone: 21° Septembris 1585 Seits de feodo de qr vocat Carrōwni . . . . in territorio de Leyne (als OHaryes boyes Cuntry) ac de 7 qr, in eadem patria, que ppter divisionem inter se et fratres suos, sibi assignabantur viz qr de . . . . qr de Dromcon, qr de Lyseneche, qr de Clonaghecarra, qr de Sqo, qr de Banney qr de Clarra — at de quo vel de quib pdic Donaldus tenuit p noiatus 8 qr, vel p que servitia ignorant. Est quodam Monasterm sive domus nup fratriu seci Dominici Juxta villam de . . . . conti ent in se 1 qr Eccliam cu Campanill . . . . . ac quod est 11 gurges vulgarit dictus . . . . . quod Monasterm cu suis decimis de Jure spectare debent ad Reginam racone statutoy pdict . . . . . quod pmissa sunt adhuc in occupatione quorundem Sacerdotu olim fratrium dicti Monasterii . . . .

*(There are 7 more lines which are illegible in the original.)*



## Inq°: 6.

Inq°: capta apud villam de Slygo 7°: Octobris 1587, Cora Johanne Crofton p sacramentu pbo Walter OCrean de Sligo, Bryan O'Dowde de Iskerowen, Patr' OHart de Bradcullen, Rory OHart de Ardtearman, Melaghlin McDonogh de Cowloony, Enreas Oconnor de Dromclew, Jac. McSwyne de Downaghentrahy, Bryan McSwyne de Ardneglasse, Hubert Albanagh de Ralee, Allan Albanagh de Rallee, Donaldus OCrean de Slygo, Melaghlin McDonogh de Ballendowne, Owen ( ) de Grange, Enreas McNemy.

Qui dicunt quod cu p divisa statuta patet quod omnie abbatie domus Religioso cu suis puribz et decimis de Jure spectant ad Elizabetham ——— Est quedam Monasteriu tertii ordinis sci Francisii in baronia de Leyne vocat Monasteriu de Court Continent in se 1 Ecclia.

Quod sunt 2 qr Juxta pdict Monasteriu qua 1 vocatur Cearrow Ardower et alia Cearrowen Tawny, continent in se 80 acr terr que spectant ad Monasteriu quod Monasteriu cu 2 qr dicunt spectare de Jure ad Elizabetham, ratione statuto pdic ——— et quod nuc sunt in occupatione cujusd Rogeri ballagh ——— sacerdotis ——— quod quedam alia capella cu 1 qr vocat Alterenan in barronia de Tyreragh, qui dicunt spectare ad Regina ut pcell nup Monasterii de Knockmoye et p longu tempus concelat fuisse a Regina ———

## Inq°: 7.

Inq°: capta apud villam de Sligo 7°: Octobr 1587 coram Johanne Crofton p sacramentu pbo Walter OCrean, Sligo, Rory O'Hart Ardtarmon, Jacobus McSwyne, Donoghentrayne, Alanus Albanagh, Ralee, Bernardus O'Dowde, Iskerowen, Malachias McDonogh, Coolony, Bernardus McSwyne, Ardneglasse, Donaldus OCrean, Sligo, Patricius OHart, Bradcullen, Andreas OConor, Dromclewe, Herbert Albanagh, Ralee, Malachias McDonogh, Ballendowne.

Qui dicunt quod cu p divisa statuta patet quod omes Monasteria cum suis terr et decimis Jure spectant ad Reginam ——— Est quodam Monasteriu in villa de Bally Assadarra als Astary continent in se seitu ambitu et peinctu ejusdem Prioratus in qua sunt 1 Ecclia ruinosam straminibz cooperta 1 dormitorium ac ruine 2 domo 1 cimiteriu ac 3 cottag cu suis curtelagiis sive gardinis ——— item 3 parve qr terr cum suis ptin ac decimis in villa de Assadarra contin p estimacone 40 acr terr arrabilis et 60 acr montan quod est quedam alia pcella terr vocat Trim Bally contin in se 30 acr terr arabilis et pasture cu suis decimis que sunt temporalia ejusd prioratus ——— quod Rectoria cu viccaria Ecclie pochialis de Bally Assadarra, vulgarit dict Templemore (viz 3 ptes decima dict Ecclie spectant que current in villis villat vocat le Termons spectant ad Prioratu ——— ac quod vicaria de Enagh in patria de Tyrereyll Ac viccaria de Drumrat in baronia de Corren, ac viccaria de Kilnegarvan in patria McGordan spectant quoque ad Prioratu ——— quod prioratus pdic cum decimis et ptin spectat ad Reginam ratione statuto pdic ———



## INQ°: 8.

INQ°: capta apud villam de Sligo 8°: Junii 1588 coram Johane Crofton p sacramentu pbo Taddeus OHara de Tully, Gen Cahall McMulrony, Roscribbe, gen: Martinus Lyle de Ballykilkerre, gen: Taddeus McNemy de Ballycottell, gen: Hugo OConnor de Ballindrehid gen: Teig Reogh McDonogh de Lysley gen: Dermot OHely de Castle Logh Dargyn, gen: Dowaltogh OConnor de Leghvally: Gillechrist McDonogh de Roscribbe, gen: Inill OGary, als OGary de Moygh gen: Bryan Ultagh OConnor, de Downally: Melaghlin McDonogh de Ballendowne, gen: Rory OGary de Carrow Reagh, gen.

Qui dicunt quod Donaldus OConnor tempore vite sue fuit seitus de Maneriis Castris terr tenement et redditibz Subnoratis, de Manerio Castro et Villa de Sligo als Slyagh ac de 29 qr terr et 1 cartron cu eo ptin in villis villat sive hamlet et campis eo in baronia vocat Carbry — ac de omnibz castris edificis ac domibz scituat sup pdic 29 qr et 1 cartron ac de castro et villa de Moy Imlagh in baronia de Leghny cu 1½ qr — ac de castro et villa de Bon Inny in baronia de Tereragh cu 7 qr — ac quod fuit quoque seitus de feodo de Reddilibz subsequentibz exeunt de diversis terris in eodem Com Sligo — viz de annale redditu ex qualibet qr existent intra barroniam de Carbry except in illis terris que ad Reginam ptinent de Jure Corone sue aut Monasterio ac in ips terris que ad Episcopum Elphinensem spectant, aut que p compositionem nup initam inter Reginam et Patriam divis generosis allocant liberas — ac de annuale redditu ex qualibet qr in barronia de Tyreragh, except in terris ad Regina spectant et ad Episcopum Alladinsem et que allocant liberas divis generosis p compositionem pdic — ac de annuale redditu ex qualibet qr in baronia voc Lez leyneys, except in terris ad Regina spectantibz et ad Episcopu Conerensem als de Otcowry et que divis generosis allocant liberas — ac de annuale redditu ex qualibet, except in terris Reginae et Episcopo Elphiniensi ptinentibz et que allocant liber divis generosis — ac de annuale redditu, ex qualibet qr in barronia vocat Cowlooy, except in terris Regine aut ad Episcopum Connerensem als de Otcowry ptin aut que allocant liber divis generosis — ac quod pdic Donaldus sic seitus de pmissis specificatis 8° Novembris anno Regni Regine Elizabeth 9°, dedit et sursu reddidit ad manus Regine ora et singula maneria Castra Messuag terr tenement reddit et servitia superius specificat — ac quod Regina sic siet virtute sursu reddiconis pdic, de pmissis p specificat p literas suas patents gerent dat 22 Decembris 1584 concepit pfat Donaldo pmiss pdic ad terminu vite sue et post ejus obitu omnia pdic remanere certis heredibz masculis legitime pcreat de Corpore Taddey OConnor nup de Sligo — et p defectu talii heredu masculo, quod omnia pmiss reverterent ac remanerent Elizabeth hered et successoribz in ppetuu — quod pdic Donaldus sic seitus de pmiss p tempor vite sue diem clausit extrema apud villam de Slygo 1° Januarii 1587, absque heredibz masculis de corpore suo legitime pcreat — quod pdic Taddeus OConnor tempor vite sue habuit et retinuit Coco

uxor divsas mulieras innuptas viz Rosyam McGroyre p quam habuit exitu pdic Donaldi Joannam ny Donell aliam, ac Egidia vulgarit nuncupat Gyles McDowde p quam habuit exitu car oln als Cahall oge OConnor ——— quod pfat Taddeus diem clausit extremu, sine alique herede masculo de corpore suo legitime preato 30 Julii 15 2 et anno regni nup Regis Edwardi sexti, 6° ——— quod pdic Carolus als Cahall oge OConnor die quo obiit seitus fuit de Abbatia de Ballyassadarra, et quod pdic Carolus intrusit sup possessione Regine nunc de Monasterio pdic sub ptextu quarund Bulla Pontificis Romani vulgarit : The Popes Bulls ——— et quod pdic Carolus intravit et sucepit ordinus Ecclesiastices minores viz Binnnet et Collect ——— quod retinuit divsas mulieres innuptas viz Egidiam als Gyles Burk Benooone ny Dermot ac Catherinam ny Bewley et quod pdic Carolus sie p intrusionem possessionatus de Monasterio de Ballyassadara obiit 16° May 1582 ——— quod Morina als More in Bourke fuit uxor legitima antedre Donaldi Oconnor que adhuc innupta manet ——— quod pdic Donaldus OConnor Miles tenuit omia pmiss de Regina in capite p servitiu militare ———

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Inq°: 9.

Inq: capta apud villam de Slygo 27° July 1590, coram Johane Crofton, p sacrametu pbo Wm ——— de Bonneddan, Thadeus O'Hara de Tullaghea, Melaghlín McDoney de Clony, Hugh McDonogh de Castle Lough Dergan, Dermot McCrany de Ballyadderaowen, Cahall McBrehowen de Kilmacallan, Thadeus OHiggin de Cowlrecoll, Shane oge OHara de Ballyara, Hugh McConnor oge de Bradcullen, Owen OHara de Ballyara, Teig McOwen de Lerras, Shane McFerganany OConnor de Skardan, Alex<sup>r</sup> McSwyne de Dromnegrangy, Hugh boy McMoretagh de Rynlaghty Thadeus Boy McTumultagh de Gortynearny, Mulmurrie McDonnell de Roslie, Innyse McNeny de Killeny, qui dicunt quod Edmundus ODowde, dum clauderat extremu 6° Augusti, anno regni Reginae Elizabethe 29° seitus de feodo de mediatate Castri de Kilglasse, viz parti superiori dicti Castri, ac de qr voc Carron Caslankillagh in de ——— et de 15 qr in patria pdic, que fuerent terras transitor et ptinebat semp principali ejusdem cognominis sed p compositionem initam inter Reginam et patriam confirmate fuerent pdic Edmundo et hered, qui quidem 15 qr nominatur viz Carro-Carbry, Keyley, Carro Iboy, Carro Cuyge, Ibaroy, Leghbally, Ardegally, Carroen, Carro Igurny, Carro Knokan, Carro McGillehouly, Carro Bunowen, Leyghvally downe floyne, ac Carro fynyde ——— quod pdic Edmundus fuit quoque seitus de feodo de 3 qr in patria pdic que sunt libere ——— viz Carro en Rodde, Carro Cassilboy, et Carro en Culyer ac de  $\frac{1}{2}$  pte terra Sleight Rory O'Dowde et quod fuit eodem modo seitus de  $\frac{1}{2}$  pte omniu terra spectant ad stirpem vocat Sleight Teige ODowde, ac quoque de  $\frac{1}{2}$  pte Castri vocat Castele Cono<sup>r</sup> in eadem patria et omniu terra et tenemento spectant ad Stirpem vocat Sleyght Donoghe ODowde ——— Et quod pdic Edmundus tenebat pmiss de Regina in capite sed p que



servilia ignorant ——— quod pdic sic seitus de pmiss feoffavit quendam Davia ODowde nepotem, ac de omnibz aliis Castris terris & redditibz suis habendum sibi et heredibz suis per chartam gerent dat 1° Augusti 1587 apparet, tenor cujus charte sequitur in his verbis “sciant presentes et future” quod Ego Edmundus ODowde concepi et haec psemi charta confirmavi pfato Davido ODowde oia maneria castra terris reddit et servetia quaecunque cum omnibz Juribz et ptinentibz que habeo vel habere debeo in Kilglasse, longford Idowda, Ardneglasse, Tonerege, Bunyn, Carrovankassell, Downele, Skrin, litlegrange, Agherisse, Grange mor, Downkohy, Roslie, Ballinkeslan alis Imli Isell, Ralieve, Carroan rodgy, Lihony, Isgrivin, Cottellton, Conno’ Ardinry, Donaltan, Donmekin, Ballinehowne, Ballivoghan, Dowzy, Balline-maghe, Skovinar, Colcharno, Balliogan, Donaghantraha, alterlackan, Polloghkein, Larraghkeslan, et Corraghe, infra com et provincia pdic infra totu regnu Hibernie.

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INQ°. 10.

INQ°: capta apud villam de Sligo 27: Julii 1590, coram Johane Crofton p sacramentu pbo

*(Same Jurors as in No. 11 following).*

Qui dicunt quod Matheus O’Higin die claudebat extremu 9° Januarii 1585, seitus de feoda de villa villata sive hamleta vocat Dongherand in baronia de Leyny, ac de 4 qr, ac etiam de 2 aliis qr vocat Leghbally, Meylagh, que 6 qr subdite sunt oneribz patrie ——— et quod pdict teneit pmiss de Regina in capite sed p que servitia ignorant ——— quod Tadeus vulgarit vocat Teydall O’Higyn est pximus heres pdic, nunc est etats 40 annos et maritat ———

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INQ°. 11.

INQ°. capta apud villam de Ballmoate 11° Januarii 1593, coram Richardo Boyle p sacramentu pbo, Richard Lennan of Tskerowen, James O’Crean of Sligo, Dermicuis Dowde de Ballincottel, Nicholaus Caddell de Moynlagh, Manus Reogh de Rathmullen, Alexr McSwyne, Thadeus McOwen de Laras, Phelim O’Connor de Scardon, Dermicurs McMulrony de Cullmayny, Wille OHiggin of Moyntaghe, Cahall McTomultagh de Lisscoma, James McDonoghe, Bryan McSwyne de Ardneglass, Thadeus Oge McTirlagh Carragh de Annagh, Murragh McTumultagh de Cowlemayny, Wills OHarte de Castle-carra, Cahell Oge de Clonicashell, Wills OHarte de Dunenell, Manus OBoland de Carronfashen, Rorie Ballowe de Knockmullen, Connels. OClovan de Killouren, Mauricurs Kewgh de Clonmaighe.

Qui dicunt quod Pryor et Convent nup monasterii Sancti Johis Baptiste, ppe Loghrie in patrie de Imanie in com Roscommon, tempore sursum redicois ejusdam Priorat fuerunt sesiti de feodo in Jure ejusd Priorat de



quoddam domo religioso vocat le Commandrye de Taght . . . . .  
 4 villat sive 16 qr terr cu co decimis et ptin in Com Slygoe, quo nomina  
 subsequuntur, viz 4 qr terr cu co decimis in villa et campis de Ballymorrey,  
 4 qr co decimis in villa et campis de Ballyhannaghe, et 4 qr cu in villa et  
 campis de Ballincarr que omnia pmiss racione diverso statuto ad Regina  
 in Jure Corone sue hibnie spectant.

Et quod dicte 2 ville de Ballyhannaghe et Ballincarra cu co ptine, a  
 regina et a Georgio Goodman armigero firme ejusdem Regine, fuer p Cor-  
 macum OHarie als OHarie Boye p longu tempus concelat et injusti detent  
 a regina absque aliquo Cahalloge McCahill Duffe, gent, Alexr McSwyne  
 Jure vel tituiestis Juratorib cognit.

Quod Willis Clyfford diem suu Clausit extremu 20<sup>o</sup> Junii 1593, sesitus  
 de feodo de 1 Castro lapideo vocat Tully, ac 1 qr terr ptin ——— et ill  
 tenuit de Regina p serviciu militare ——— Et quod Franciscus Clyfforde  
 est ejus filius et heres et fuit etate circiter 8 anno, tempore captionis hujus  
 inquisiciois et non maritatus.

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#### INQ. 12.

Inq<sup>o</sup>. capta apud villam de Ballymoate 12<sup>o</sup> Januarii 1593, coram Ricardo  
 Boyle p sacramentu pbo, Richard Lennan, gent, Thadeus McFirlagh Car-  
 raghe, Wm. OHart, gent, Dermot ODowde, gent, Brian McSwyne, gent,  
 Dermot McMulrony, gent, Manus OBeolan, gent, Mouertagh McDonagh,  
 gent, Jas OCrean, gent, Rorie Ballagh McCahillelly, gent, Ohelim OConnor,  
 gent, Tady McOwen, gent, Manus Reoghe, gent, Maurice Keoughe, gent,  
 Walter Walshe, gent, Cahall McTomultagh, gent, Cahall oge McCahill  
 Duffe, gent, Alexr McSwyne.

Qui dicunt quod Thadeus als Teage OHiggen, diem sun clausit extremu  
 ultimo Martii 1591, sesitus de feodo de 2 qr vocat Carrownecapell et Car-  
 rowne-cromtample et de 7 aliis qr ——— viz 2 qr terr vocat Leighballycon  
 . . . . . Carrowclownegownaghe, Carrow Clownbarrie, Carrowkyne-  
 killinbane et Leghbally Kyldallyhe et pmiss tenuit de Regina p serviciu  
 militare ——— quod Thadeus oge McTeage OHiggin, est filius et heres  
 pdic et fuit de etate ganno tempore patris pdic obitus.

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#### INQ. 13.

Inq<sup>o</sup>. capta apud villam de Ballymoate 12<sup>o</sup> Januarii 1593, coram Richardo  
 Boyle, p sacramentu pbo.

[*Jurors same as last.*]

Qui dicunt quod Gilbertus Greene diem suu clausit extremu 20<sup>o</sup> May  
 1593 sesitus de feodo de 2 plibus Castri de Bricklieve, ac  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr vocat Kilfer-  
 nocke, 2 qr Cloghoge, 1 qr voc Carrolyel 1 qr Tryen Strebbby, 1 qr Cowl-

skeagh, 1 qr Knockmyell, 1 qr Cowskeagh als Cowlteseagh, 1 qr Carrowneallye, et  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr Clonyoyghan virtute 2 ffeoffanto eidem Gilberto Greene, p Owinu McShane McDermot gerend dat 11° Junii 1592 pfert in debita Juris forma fact p Tumultagh McMulrony, Thadeu M<sup>r</sup>Farrell, Donaldu McMulrony, Bury McMelaghlen M<sup>r</sup>Dermott, quod pmiss concepe fuerunt pfat Gilberto sub condicoe quod idem Gilbertus redaret eidem Owino McDermott filiis suis Tireloto Dermicio et Briano et heredibus masculis de corporib co legittime pereat, 1 qr terr voc Carrowkeyle, 1 cartron de Kilfernocke et 1 cartron in Cloghoge, ad quod servaret pmiss libera ex ondat quibyeunque.

Et quod pdic Gilbertus similiter faceret consimilem stat eidem Tumutagh McMulrony, Thadeo McFferrell, Donaldu McMulrony et Thadeo Bwy et heredib masculis de corporib co legittime pereat tertie ptis pdic 4 qr — et quod de tempore in tempus serviret pmiss exondat ab omnib onerib patrie — Et quod pdic Gilbertus fuit quoque sesitus de feodo de 4 qr Ballyeddarowen, et pmiss tenuit de Regina p servitiu militare — quod Elizabetha tempore captionis hujus inquisicones et non maritat.

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Inq°. 14.

Inq°. capta apud villam de Ballymoate 12° Januarii 1593, coram Richardo Boyle, sacramentu pboy.

[*Same Jurors as in 12.*]

Qui dicunt quod Gillechrist McDonoghe fuit sesitus de feodo de  $\frac{1}{2}$  pte ville de Rosscribber, continen 1 Trien terr — ac de 6 aliis qr in Conoryn Sleyght Morris, quo nomia subsequuntur viz Carowe Quinygin, Carowe Carnemyelyne, Carowegranymore, Carowe ne Creve, Carowe Lisdowngan, ac de 2 aliis qr in Clonegashell et 28° Apile 1590 obiit absque aliquib vel aliquo hered — Et quod omnia suprascripta tenentur Regina p servitiu militare et ad Reginam spectant — Et quod Catherina ny Ffahne alias Donnoghe fuit uxor legittima pdic et clamat dotem suam ex pmiss.

Quod Roncus Keoghe OHarye 27° May 1592 attinct, tempore attincture sue fuit quiete sesit de feodo de 2 qr in terr de Sleight — Shane boy McOwen O'hare — ratione cujus attincture pdic 2 qr ad Regina, de qua tenentur, spectant. Quod Ffardoraghe McDonoghe nup de Cowlac ejus nacois principal fuit p cursu cois legis regni hibnie alte pdicois attinct et tempore attincture sue fuit sesitus de feodo de 3 qr, (a compositione Regine exonerat) in Cowlac pdic — Quod Tumultaghe McWilliam O'Harye seit fuit de feodo de  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr  $\frac{1}{2}$  parte semiqr in Cashellcormick, et ultim February 1588 apud carrow Carraghe levavit querram contra Reginam et in eadem accione Rebellionis fuit die anno et loco suprascript interfectus, ratione cujus pmiss spectant ad Regina in Jure corone sue hibnie spectant, et ab ea injuste concel et detinentur.



Quod Ovinius als Owen McEdmond O'Harie, Arthurus als Arte O'Harie McPhelim, Donaldus O'Harie McPhelim, Brianus O'Haree McPhelim et Willis McCorcashell fuerunt p cursu comunis legis hibnie alte pdicionis attinct, et tempore co attincture fuerunt insimull seiti de feodo de  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr et semi qr in villa et campis de Cashillcormick.

Quod Donaldus als Donyll McShane Egean fuit p cursu cois legis Hibnie 7<sup>o</sup> May 1592 apud villam de Slygoe alte pdicois attinct et tempore attincture sue fuit seitus de feodo de 1 qr vocat Leighcarowetullagh, et Leighcarowekappae, que ad Regina racone attincture pdic spectant.

Quod est cella dissolut patriu nigro vocat Carmulyte Ffryers appellat Knockmore cu 1 qr terr cum sius decimis in patria de Ogarie, que racone divso statuto, ad Regina spectat, et ab ea injuste detinent — quod Pryor et convent nup Priorat sancti Johannis extra novam portam Civitatis Dublin, tempore dissoluciois sive sursu reddicois ejusdem fuer seiti de feodo in Jure ejusdem de Rectoria vocat Rectoria inter duos portes cum omnibz glebis & decimis quibzcuque in barronia de Carbry et virtute divso statuto, Rector pd cu ptin ad Regina ut annex carone sue Hibnie spectat et ab ea injuste detinentur.

#### INQ:º 15 EPISCOPAT ACCADEN'.

Inq' capt' apud Aghonra infra com' Sligo 18:º Augusti 1585, cor' Danile Dareus' Epo' p sacramentu pbo &c, quorum nomina subsequuntur, Brian' McMoroni, Darbisis Bren, Teig O'Harte, Phelim O'Connor, Melaghlin McDonogh, Melaghlin McDonogh de Clowny, Joh' O'Mulconra, Connor Cahen, Carolus McDere, Manus Reogh McTeagboy, Brian O'Dowde, Erevan' McSwyne, Miler' McManus, Ror' McGinella, Cahill McHeugh, Johannes Glass, Brian' oge McPersun, John O'Hart, Muredac' McManus, Lucas McBreghun, Roric' O'Dowde, Carol' O'Synan & Brien McSwyne.

qui dic' quod Episcopat' Aghaden' infra Dioch' Aghaben' val' p' ann' 10£,

Dicanat' Aghaden val' p' ann' 20s,

ppositus Achaden 6s 8d,

Archionat' Aghaden cu viccar' de Kilbrowryh infra dior' pdic' 4s,

Vicar' de Kilvardnaha 4s,

Vicar' de Killowran 10s,

Qd de ann' val' vicarie de Kilm'teig infra dioc' pdic' ignorannt q' vastat',

Qd vicar' de Killesy val' p ann' 2s,

„ „ Attemas nihil q' vast',

„ „ Strade 4s,

„ „ Killodan 5s,

„ „ Killconnon nihil q' vast',



Qd vicar' de Kilveigh 4s,  
 " " Moyconra nihil q' vast',  
 " " Templemanrys 5s,  
 " " Kilcolman 3s,  
 " " Killara 3s,  
 " " Killosalvan 2s,  
 " " Jumlehaedys 3s .. 4d,  
 " " Trymore 3s,  
 " " Kilmorchor 20d,  
 " " Clonoghill 8s,  
 Rectoria de Cowlaven, 6s .. 8d,  
 Vicar' de Cowlaven 3s .. 4d,  
 Rectoria de Slewloa 10s,  
 " " Bowcowlye 2s .. 8d,  
 Rectoria voc' "inter duos ammes" 3s .. 4d,  
 " de Killownan 13s .. 4d,  
 Qd Decanat' Tirelli infra dioc' Elphin; vicar' de Acanagh val' p  
 ann' 20:d,  
 Vicar' de Tawnagh 16:d,  
 " " Kilmacallan 3s .. 4d,  
 " " Kilm<sup>e</sup>trana 12:d,  
 " " Kilvacuan 20:d,  
 " " Shencogh 12:d,  
 " " Dromcellan 16:d,  
 " " Cowleha 8:d,  
 " " Dromdowan 20:d,  
 " " Kilrasse 20:d,  
 Qd in Decanat de Carbrie infra dioc' Elphin pd' Prebend' de  
 Duncleif & reoria p nomen rector' Prebend' de Dumclif con-  
 junctim infra decanat' de Carbri in dioc' Elphin pd' val' p  
 ann' 40s,  
 Vicaria de Duncleif 20s,  
 Prebend' de Kilmacallan 6s .. 8d,  
 Vicar' de Kilmacallan 3s .. 4d,  
 " " Kilmacowen 20d,  
 " " Kilaspeckbrowne 13s .. 4d,  
 rectoria de Sligo inter duos pontes infra dioc' Elphin val' p ann'  
 6s/8d,  
 Vicaria de Sligo inter duos pontes 3s .. 4d,  
 Vicar' de Kalragh 12:d ———

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EXCHEQ<sup>R</sup> INQUISITIONS. SLIGO. ELIZABETH.

No. 7. Inq. Capta apud Villam de Slygoe vii<sup>o</sup>. die Martii Anno Dni  
 1584, Coram Johanne Crofton Armig' generali Exaetor' et ffeodar' die dne

Regine Regni sui Hiberniae p'dict' virtute officii sui, per Sacramentum pborum & legalium hominum ejusdem Comit' quorum Nomina subsequunt':—

Richardus Dogherty de Ballymota.  
 Jacobus O'Crean de Slygoe.  
 Malachias McDonogh de Coolwony.  
 Feras O'Dowgenane de Shencho.  
 Manus Reogh McTeig boy de Lessecune.  
 Barnardus Mar( )us de Granggemore.  
 Walterus O'Crean de Slygoe.  
 Cahall McDevie de Aghanagh.  
 Manus McConnor Oge de eadem.  
 Tomaltagh oge O'Skanlan de Portynche.  
 Ennis McNemy de Kyllen.  
 Phelemius O'Connor de Scardan.  
 ——— O'Harte de Ardtarnam.  
 Morys McDonogh de Clonymahine.  
 Teig Dalle O'Higen de Dowhorn.  
 Owen O'Skanlan de Radoune.  
 Jacobus McSwyne de Downwyfe.  
 Johannes O'Creane de Sligoe.  
 ——— O'Skanlan de Ballyskanlan.  
 Mulmore O'Dowgenan de Shencho.  
 Bryane Boy McGoan de Aconrey.  
 Manus Reogh McDonogh de Rathmullen.  
 Farren Reogh O'Menaghau de eadem.

Qui Juratores dicunt &c quod Dnus, Henricus Octavus &c per sursum redditum et quod' statuta sive actus parlamenti rite ac Just' ac in Jure Corone sue Hibernial fuit intitulat' possessionatus ac seisitus sibi heredibus ac successoribus suis ad in ac de omnibus & singulis abbatiis monasteriis et et Domibus Religiosorum in ac per totum hoc regnum hibernie cum oibz & singlis dominiis maneriis terris tenent' advocacoibz donationibus et aliis pficuis et emolument' quibz cunque abbatiis monasteriis et domibus religiosorum aligiosorum aliquatiter pertinentibz aut Spectantibus.

Ac sic inter alia fuit intitulatus . . ad monasterium, prioratum sive domus Canonicorum de Inchvickryny in Logh Kee in patria de Moylurge in comitat' Koscommon &c &c. Et quod idem dnus Henricus Rex Octavus sic existens seitus exinde sic seisitus obiit, post cujus mortem oia et singula premissa descendebant et devenerunt domino Edwardo sexto . . in Jure Corone sue hiberniae . . . post cujus mortem . . . descendebant et Devenerunt dominae Marial nuper Reginae ut in Jure Corone sue hibernie . . . post cujus mortem omnia et singla premisa ramanebant et descendebant in Jure Corone sue Hiberniae predict' ad dnam nram Elizabeth' nunc reginam. Item dicunt Juratores &c &c quod he sunt pcelle tam terrar' temporal' quam decimarum et aliarum spiritualium pertinentes ad prio-

ratum de Inshvikryny que sunt in Comitatus Sligo, Kilkerre 4 quarter' terrae, ac Decim, illius ville in patria sive Baronia de Tireryll; ac semi Villata, viz:—duas quarter' terre in Kylmyckroy in Baronia predict'; ac dimid' unius quarter' terre in Dromdonay cum decimis' . . in Dicta Baronia ac de Rectoria de Aghanagh in Baronia de Tirerryll predict' (viz. duas partes sive medietas omnium decimarum . . intra parochiam de Aghanagh) spectat' ad prioratum de Inshvyckrin &c &c &c.

Ac quod Rectoria de Kylmecalán in dicta' Baronia spectat ad priorat predict'. Ac quod Rectoria de Culea in dicta Baronia spectat similiter ad priorat' predict'.

Dicunt insuper prenominati Juratores super sacramentum suum quod omnia et singula premissa fuerunt per longum tempus Concellata et incognita, ac plerique vastat' et inculta Jacuerunt, ita ut dna nra Regina nullum exinde proficu habuit, quousque quid' Eugenius O'Connor clericus intrabat in premissis ut custos eorundem pro dna Regina ut ipse asserit.

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## APPENDIX D.

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### SURVEY OF CONNAUGHT.

1633-6.

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#### THE HALF BARONY OF COOLAVIN.

THE Halfe Barony of Coolavin in the Dioces of Achonra conteyneth Parishes,  
2, (viz) Killfroy and Killaraght,

Gillfroy Parish or  
Clonohiglish Parish.

conteyneth qrs, Killfroy 2 qrs, Levalle-dun-Killefroy, 2 Coro-ghnotona, i, Annaghmore, i, Clunsollagh, 2, Lavalles-in-Cloher, 2, Caronnovalleccooy, i, Carownoserove, i, Tawnaghnamucklagh, i, Lavalley Spallan, 2, Copponagh Tawran, i, Syfin, i, Cluneugh, i, Monesteredam, i, Drummuckow, i, Canegheglis, i, Moygara, i, Carownekill Skorney, i, Carowinmalleroy, i, Clontecarn, i, Carowreagh, i, Lissaballil, i, Moyduagh, i, Calteraghn, i, Knocknashimor, i, Carownecroy, i, Lavallegortigara, 2, quar, Lissosine, i, Knocknahua, Kollomore, 2, Knocknascagh.

The tythes of this parish are divided into 4 partes wherof the Lord Bishop hath  $\frac{1}{4}$ , Sir Robert King Knt, hath  $\frac{2}{4}$  his inheritance in right of the Abbey of Boyle to which it is impro.

Mr. Sharpe presented by the Bishop viccar, and the present incumbent therein, hath the other 4<sup>th</sup>. The tythe is set for £15, soe that the viccar's share may be worth £15 per annum. Gillfroy, 2, qrs. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara who sets it to the under tenants for £12 per annum. No duties, it hath but a little patch of Arrable land, it hath good turfe and firwood, it hath greate scope of heathey ground, noe meddow, it will grase 60 cowes and it is worth £12 per annum. Lavalledun Killefoy:—2 qrs. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara whoe setts it to under tenants for £12 per Annum, it is all wood and mounteyne, but a little it hath good fir(e), wood and turfe, no meddowe it will grase 60 cowes and it is worth 12 per annum.

Carowntona, 1. quar The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara whoe setts it to under tenants for £4 per annum, it is all timber wood and heathey ground, and it will grase 25 cowes and it is worth £5 per annum.

Annoghmore, 1. quarr The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara, whoe settis it for £4 per Ann, it is all tymber-wood, it will grase 25 cowes and it is worth £5 per Ann.

Clonsolagh, 2. quar. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara whoe settis it to under tenants per £18, it is some parte good arrable land, and greate woods for tymber, it hath good turffe, 5 dayes mowinge, it will grase 100 cowes and it is worth £18 per annum.

Lavallein Clogher, 2 qrs. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara, who settis it to under tenants for £30 it is a parte good tymber wood, it hath good turff 5 dayes mowinge it will grase 100 and 50 cowes, and is worth £30 per annum.

Carownosrue, 1. quar, The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara, who settis it to under tenants for £18 it hath a good parcell of arable land, and a great scope of woode and heathey ground, it hath good turff, 8 dayes mowinge, it will grase 70 cowes, and it is worth £18 per annum.

Carownavallinonow, 1 qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara whoe settis it for £8 per annum, it is all tymber wood, and mountayne, it will grase 40 cowes, and it is worth £8 per annum.

Levallehaunanomucklagh, 2 qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara whoe settis to undertenants for £30, it is some parte good arrable land, it hath good timberwood, and 8 dayes mowinge, if it were keepte, it hath good turffe, it will grase 300 cowes, and it is worth £30 per annum.

Lavalleispallan. 2 qrs. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara whoe settis it to undertenants for £30. it is like Tawnanomucklogh altogether in qualities, and it will grase 300 cowes and it is worth £30 per annum.

Capponagh, 1. qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara whoe keeps it in his own hands, it is good arrable lande, and heathy ground, it hath some shelter and good turffe 10 dayes mowinge it will grase. 200 cowes and it is worth £20 per annum.

Tawran, 1 qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara whoe settis it to undertenants for £10 per annum, it is all wood and mounteyne, it will grase 100 cowes, and it is worth £10 per annum.

Soyfin & Cloneagh, 2 qrs. The inherit, of Farrill O'Gara who settis them two qrs for £16. it is all wood and mounteyne, as aforesaid, it will grase 80 cowes, and is worth £16 per annum.

Manestedan 1 qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara who settis it to undertenants for £7. it is all wood and mounteyne it will grase 35 cowes and it is worth £17 per annum.

Drommackon, 1 qr. The inheritance of my Lord Dillon or Farrill O'Gara, it is in difference betwixt them: My Lord Dillon sayes it is of the County of Mayo and his own inheritance, Mr Farrill O'Gara says the contrary, that it is his own inheritance in the county of Sligoe and half Barroney of Coolavin, it is all wood and mounteyne, it will grase. 100 cowes and it is worth £10 per annum.

Cloonoheglis. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara, who settis it to undertenants for £7. it is some parte good arrable lande & there is a church upon this quarter wherein they burye the dead of this halfe Barrowney, it hath

good turffe, 4 days mowinge, it will grase 35 cowes and it is worth £7 per annum.

Moy-Gara, 1. qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara who setts it to undertenants for £21. it is some parte good arrable lande, it hath good shelter and fir-wood, and a great scope of Mounteyne—7 dayes mowing, it will grase 205 cowes and it is worth £21 per annum. There is an old Castle upon this quarter.

Carowenekillscoreny, 1. qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara whoe setts it to undertenants for £21 per annum, it is some parte good arable land, it hath good wood & turffe, 8 dayes mowing, it will grase 200 and 5 cowes and it is worth £21 per annum.

Carowmallyroe, 1. qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara who setts to undertenants for £10, it is some parte arrable lande and heathey ground, it hath good turffe and shelter, it will grase 100 cowes and it is worth £10 per annum.

Clutecarne, 1. quar. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara who sets it to undertenants for £16 per annum, it hath some arrable lande and woods for tymber, it hath goode turffe, 5 dayes mowinge, if it weare kept, and it will grase 80 cowes and it is worth £16 per annum.

Carrowreagh—1—quar. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara who setts it to undertenants for £21. it is good arrable land and it hath good wood and turffe and a great scope of Mounteyne, it will grase 205 cowes and it is worth £21 per annum.

Lisballile, 1. qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara, who setts it for £21 pounds it is good arrable land a parte, it hath good wood and turffe, and 8 dayes mowinge, it will grase 205 cowes, and it is worth £21 per annum.

Moyduagh, 1. qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara who setts it for £16 per annum, it is some parte good arrable lande, it hath some shelter, and some heathey ground, it hath good turffe, 6 days mowing, it will grase 80 cowes, and it is worth £16 per annum.

Caltran, 1. qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara who setts it for £21, it is parte good arrable lande, it hath some wood and turffe; 8 dayes' mowing it will grase 250 cowes, and it is worth £21 per annum.

Knocknoshamur, 1. qr. The inheritance of the said Farrill O'Gara, who setts it to under tenants for £10 per annum, it is good arrable lande, it hath some good shelter and good turffe, 4 days mowinge, it will grase 100 cowes, and it is worth £10 per annum.

Carownocroy, 1. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara, who setts it to under tenants for £8, it is good arrable lande, it hath some shelter and good turffe, 4 days mowinge, it will grase 40 cowes, and it is worth £8 per annum.

Levallegortigara, 2. qrs. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara, whoe setts it to undertenants for £12, it is good arrable lande, it hath good turffe and some heathey ground and good wood, it will grase 60 cowes and it is worth £12 per annum.

Lissosina, 1. quar. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara who setts it to under-



tenants for £7, it is good arrable land, it hath good turffe, noe wood, 4 days mowing, it will grase 35 cowes, and it is worth £7 per annum.

Knocknahua, 1. qr. The inheritance of Farrill O'Gara, who setts it to undertenants for £7, it hath good turffe noe wood, it is good arrable land, it hath 5 days mowing of lowe meddowe, it will grase 35 cowes and it is worth £7 per annum.

Collemore, 2 qrs. The inheritance of Mr. Dodwell, whoe setts them for £30 per annum, it is some parte good arrable land, it hath wood, and turffe, some 8 dayes mowing, it will grase 300 cowes, and are worth £30 per annum.

Knocknascagh. 1, qr. The inheritance of O'Connor which is some of my Ladey' Cresseyes Dowrey from O'Connor, who setts it to undertenants for £8, it is good arrable lande, it hath good shelter, and good turffe, 6 dayes mowinge, it will grase 40 cowes, and is worth £8 per annum.

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